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Marxism Today

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SAM RUSSELL	LABOUR AND NATO
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DISCUSSION:	
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Marxism Today

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Editorial Comments

THE Editorial Board has decided to publish in each issue of MARXISM TODAY a series of brief editorial notes and comments.

This should enable us to give our views on new books, progressive and reactionary, to participate in current polemics and discussions in the field of politics, culture and science. We should be able to treat, shortly and speedily, a whole variety of subjects, without the long delays involved in the preparation of articles. We are concerned not so much with current political events as ideological issues.

These editorial comments will be in the nature of an experiment. Their success, their interest, the width of subjects treated, depend above all on the help of our readers. We would ask for any and every suggestion of subjects worth commenting on—new books, pamphlets, speeches, discussions, articles. We would be glad if those who make suggestions would also suggest the lines of comments to be made, or even sketch out a rough draft of the proposed commentary.

The final editing of these notes will be in the hands of a single comrade, but the success of his work will depend in the main on the suggestions that come from our readers.

The Role of Politics

Karl Marx is dead, but his cause goes marching on, as the number of books and pamphlets refuting him continues to grow. Mr. Crossman tells us (*Labour in the Affluent Society*) that "the errors he made . . . were, first, his refusal to admit that in social change politics may be as dynamic a force as economics: and, secondly, his failure to see the strength of the survival instinct and the powers of adaptability which would be revealed by the Conservative forces that control capitalism". "Our democratic institutions," he says, "so far from remaining a mere superstructure *wholly conditioned by economic forces* [our italics] have revealed a potent power of social and economic change."

Marxists have always protested against propositions that the economic element is the only dynamic one. In a very well-known letter of September 21st, 1890, to Joseph Bloch, editor of a German Socialist monthly, Frederick Engels wrote:

> "According to the materialist conception of history the determining element in history is *ultimately* the production and reproduction in real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. If therefore somebody twists this into a statement that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms it into a meaningless, abstract and absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure—political forms of the class struggle and its consequences, constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc.—forms of law—and then even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the combatants: political, legal, philosophical theories, religious ideas and their further development into systems of dogma—also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their *form*. There is an interaction of all these elements, in which, amid all the endless *host* of accidents . . . the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary" [Engels' italics].

This should dispose of the idea that Marxism ever asserted that democratic institutions were "*wholly* conditioned by economic forces" or that it denied that "in social change politics may be as dynamic a force as economics".

Marx repeatedly showed that he regarded the political organisation and political struggle of the working class as being a higher form than the economic organisation and economic struggle. What on earth does Mr. Crossman think led Marx to emphasise the need of the workers to capture political power?

You could fill a book with Marx's declarations that the capitalist class would hang on to their power and privileges (Mr. Crossman's "survival instinct") and, faced with a powerful movement of the workers, would try to buy it off with concessions—for instance, the Ten Hours Act. But he did insist, too, that the capitalist, by speed-up and other devices, would attempt to recover the value of any such concessions, and he insisted, also, that capitalist "adaptability" does not extend to abandoning the drive to increase the exploitation of the workers, let alone getting off their backs.

Does Mr. Crossman deny this?

Heroes or Bullies?

In the past the right-wing Labour leaders could always rely on the block vote of the large trade unions. Today this is no longer so, and there results a deep crisis in traditional social democratic theory and practice.

The right-wing leaders have always proclaimed the supremacy of the Parliamentary Labour Party over the democratic decisions of the Labour Party Conference. So long as the block vote militated in their favour no problem arose. As R. T. McKenzie put it in his *British Political Parties* (published in 1955, p. 506):

> "The Conference could not be accorded even nominal authority in determining the long-range goals of the party if it were subject to the overriding influence of the constituency party delegates. But the parliamentary leaders have little to fear from the Party Conference as long as they retain the con-

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fidence (and the block vote support) of the traditionally moderate and Conservative leadership of the majority of the big trade unions."

But Mr. McKenzie, miles from Marxism, saw "things as they are"; he envisaged the *status quo* as something permanent, and could not see, beneath the surface, the forces of the left, that, sooner or later, were bound to emerge towards victory and challenge the established set-up. Now the day has come. The left is emerging victorious in union after union.

Martin Harrison in his recent book *Trade Unions and the Labour Party* (Allen & Unwin, 1960) analysed just such a situation. "The consequences of a radical shift in the political attitudes of one or more large unions would be considerable," he wrote:

> "If the balance of the big block votes tilted decisively the party would have to find new leaders, or the party leaders would have to accept a far greater degree of union dictatorship of policy than has been known in recent years. The block vote may some day harass the leadership as much as it once oppressed the militants."

This is precisely what is happening. "The harassing days" have come. The decisions of the big unions, once so welcome to the right wing, are now becoming anathema. Their *heroes*—Ernest Bevin and Arthur Deakin—now become Mr. Cousins—"the bully". Mr. McKenzie despairingly writes (*The Observer*, 12.6.60):

> "The basic problem is that 'inner-Party democracy' as conceived in the Labour Party Constitution, is incompatible with our system of parliamentary government."

Democracy—Bourgeois or Socialist?

Mr. McKenzie is, in one sense, quite correct. The victories of the left bring to the fore the whole constitutional position. The democratic decisions of the Labour Party Conference now threaten the supremacy of the Parliamentary Labour Party—the long acknowledged master.

The big bourgeois political parties were founded *after* the Parliamentary parties, virtually as vote-catching machines. It was taken for granted that, whilst the parties caught the votes, the Parliamentary group would remain supreme. Indeed, this was an essential assumption of British bourgeois democracy. A. L. Lowell claimed that both Tory and Liberal parties were, in fact, "shams"—the Conservative "transparent", the Liberal "opaque". When the Labour Party replaced the Liberal Party, after a first moment of fear, it came to be assumed that the Labour Party would be just as sham as its predecessors. Again as long as right-wing control of policy was assured this problem did not present itself in an acute form. But now the policy divisions are on quite fundamental issues, and with the change in the balance of forces in the trade union movement a left progressive majority is emerging. As this develops it will be more and more difficult to fit the Labour Party into the traditional pattern of bourgeois democracy.

The fundamental assumptions of *bourgeois* democracy are now under challenge. Whether the right-wing Labour leaders like it or not, the Labour Party, if it is to develop and flourish, *must* challenge these assumptions, that have *nothing* in common with *socialist* democratic theory. The issue of whether the Labour Party Conference is or is not to be sovereign is a paramount question for the future of democracy in Britain.

Live and Learn

Without seeming to notice it, the Fabian Society is beginning to present us with two conflicting views —on the one hand traditional right-wing social democracy; on the other the beginnings of a critique of fundamental Fabian ideas. This is well illustrated in *The Irresponsible Society* (Fabian Tracts 323), by Richard M. Titmuss.

Perhaps the most basic of all Fabian conceptions is the idea of the neutral, non-partisan, impartial character of the state—the classic conception of the state as above classes and outside politics. Yet Mr. Titmuss, in a self-critical statement, remarks (p. 4):

> "We did not understand that government by the people could mean that power in government, the Cabinet and the City, could be almost permanently in the hands of those educated at Eton and other public schools."

This illustrates how social scientists like Mr. Titmuss, who is Professor of Social Administration at the London School of Economics, are impelled, in so far as they make an honest study of modern British society, to find their way to a critique of the most fundamental conception of traditional Fabianism, and are coming to see that the modern British state machinery represents the interests of the capitalist class, and in contemporary society, the power of the monopolists.

Nationalised Industry in Austria

We published in the June issue of MARXISM TODAY the resolution of the British Communist Party on nationalisation. The theoretical journal of the Austrian Communist Party, *Weg und Ziel*, also in their June issue, published the resolution of a Party conference on "Questions of State Ownership in Austria", a resolution which shows that the Austrian working class faces similar problems to those of the British Labour movement.

There is no capitalist country which has so large a state sector of the economy as Austria. It includes almost the whole of heavy industry, with important

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sections of electricity and engineering. The wide extent of state ownership has led, in the words of the resolution, "to a structural weakening of the Austrian bourgeoisie". Inevitably, this extended state sector has come under heavy attack both from the big capitalists of Austria and from foreign capital, in particular from the West German monopolists who have lost through the nationalisation measures control of a number of strong economic positions which they held in Austria before the war, and which they used effectively to undermine the independence of that country.

Reaction, therefore, at home and abroad is conducting a large-scale offensive on the nationalised sector of Austrian economy, putting forward all sorts of plans for denationalisation of this or that branch, trying to weaken the state sector by bringing it into dependence on private capital at home and abroad. At the same time, like their colleagues in Britain, the Austrian capitalists are using all the reactionary aspects of the nationalised industry, which they themselves have imposed, to discredit it amongst the mass of the people.

The Austrian Communist Party, as part of its defence of the nationalised industries from the capitalist offensive, are analysing its weaknesses and putting forward a programme of struggle for the improvement, democratisation and extension of the state sector.

They are calling for measures for the greater co-ordination and planning of the different sections of nationalised industry, measures to prevent harmful competition between one sector and another, measures against the harnessing of the state sector to private capitalism, in particular to West German monopolies. They are calling for a unified state-controlled power industry with co-ordination of its various branches. They are vigorously opposing all attempts to denationalise the banks, credit and other financial institutions, and those industries which are under their control (accounting, incidentally, for some 10 per cent of the industrial working-class of Austria). They are putting forward proposals for the replacement of the representatives of big capital who now fill the key places in the boards and controlling committees of the state sector by representatives of the working class. At the same time, noting that democracy within the state-owned sector is no better than in the private sector, they are calling for an extension of workers' participation in the running of the nationalised industries.

"The Austrian working class", states the resolution, "will defend the state sector of the economy against all attacks. They decisively reject all attempts to denationalise the nationalised industries and will fight for the strengthening and extension of the state sector . . . in defending the nationalised industries the working class is defending Austrian independence against the penetration of foreign capital; in struggling to improve the working class participation in the running of the nationalised industries it is defending the democratic development of Austria. . . ."

What Kind of an Art is Music?

The publication of the book *The Language of Music*, by Deryck Cooke (Oxford University Press, 30s.) is quite an event. There have been very few books published in this country on the general theory of music, and this one, especially in the opening chapter, approaches the most fundamental problem, the nature and content of music. Mr. Cooke expounds the thesis "that composers have set out to express emotion, and that listeners have felt it to be present in their music". The opening chapter finishes with the clear statement that "music is, in fact, 'extra-musical' in the sense that poetry is 'extra-verbal', since notes, like words, have emotional connotations".

Such ideas will appear self evident to many music-lovers, who will wonder why a book needs to be written to prove what they already know. But, the fact is that the opposite notion was suggested about 100 years ago by Edouard Hanslick, a Viennese writer on music, who stated that "a musical idea is a thing in itself and not a means of expressing feelings or thoughts". Today the composer Stravinsky repeatedly pronounces with all the authority at his command that "music is, by its very nature, powerless to express anything at all, whether a feeling, an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature".

It is against such destructive ideas that Deryck Cooke's book provides an antidote. His conclusions have much in common with the Marxist theory of art in general or, in the specific case of music, with what is known in Marxist musicology as "intonation", a term first used by the Russian musicologist, Asaviev. Looked at in this way music is seen as the art of intonation, as the developed representation of the way in which men and women express their feelings through their voices. Music, with its rise and fall in pitch, accentuation, variation in speed and in tone quality, is basically a representation of human vocal inflection.

Mr. Cooke approaches the matter from a different standpoint. He has perceived that, so far as European music is concerned, all composers whose music has a tonal basis have used the same or closely similar melodic phrases, harmonies and rhythms to express and evoke similar emotions. He illustrates his propositions with hundreds of examples, providing thus a sort of phrasebook of the language of music.

Such a precise associative relation would be unacceptable, as Cooke develops it, to Marxism, be-

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cause it discounts the *national* aspect of music, which derives its basis primarily through the influence of language. Cooke mentions the similarities between speech and music as two ways of human expression, but it does not, apparently, occur to him to derive any musical characteristics from the national differences of language. Of course accent, inflection, speed and emphasis are all features of "intonation" in Asaviev's use of the term, but the actual sound of the words should not be left out of account; and this Cooke appears to do entirely.

Despite all this his book is an implied polemic against many of the aspects of formalistic *avant-garde* music, and it is undoubtedly one of the most important books on the theory of music which have appeared in Britain for a great many years.

On the Film Front

The production within a few months of two anti-trade union films from British studios has understandably caused people in the Labour movement to ask with alarm whether this is a new trend, no doubt on the principle that if one swallow does not make a summer, two probably do. They are asking whether *I'm Alright, Jack* and *The Angry Silence* coming together are more than an accident.

Once the very subject of trade unions was taboo on the cinema screen—a decade might go by without a single mention of trade unionism in Hollywood or British pictures.

So it remained through the war and immediate post-war years, when the cinema was undisputably the main form of mass entertainment in capitalist countries. The resurrection after the war of rival forms of entertainment and relaxation—more sports events, ice shows, TV, more paper for books and periodicals, and the "do-it-yourself" vogue—and the birth and success of national film-producing industries (often state-aided) in smaller countries that never had them before, combined with a rising cost of living to put economic pressure on Hollywood.

Hollywood replied in two ways—wide screens with greater spectacle and colour (that the growing TV could not match), and a greater depth in content. Crude propaganda and the blatant glorification of the war could no longer be relied upon to ensure an audience. Producers were forced to realise that their audiences were becoming more discriminating in choosing their screen fare, and the American film makers began to take their audiences more seriously. Slowly, as so often happens, the British film industry followed the logic set by Hollywood.

Subjects of social importance as varied as juvenile delinquency, race relations, capital punishment—and trade unionism—could now be discussed in commercial entertainment films. In one sense the turning of the films to treat genuine and living social issues could be seen as a step forward. But the film industry was in the main firmly in the hands of monopoly capitalism both in the U.S.A. and Britain. And when they were forced to make this turn and to treat serious issues, the monopolists tried to put this to their own advantage. If trade unions were to appear in the films let them be seen through monopoly spectacles, as fools or gangsters.

This is not to suggest that the producers of *I'm Alright, Jack* and *The Angry Silence* were personally forced to make anti-union films by their masters, nor to free them from personal responsibility, but it does outline a trend and shows the danger of the ever-growing monopoly control of the films.

The Facts of Affluence

Is it not time that stronger objection was taken to Labour leaders designating present-day British capitalism as an "affluent society"? The fact that J. K. Galbraith applied it, with a certain irony, to the United States (where average living standards are much higher than they are here) does not justify its uncritical application to Britain. Even if some irony is also intended by those who apply it to Britain, its parrot-like repetition can only play the game of the Tory propagandists. Yet Mr. R. H. S. Crossman perpetuates this grossly inaccurate description in his recent pamphlet *Labour in the Affluent Society* (Fabian Tracts 325).

Never, since the Social Services were installed, was there a greater gap between the earnings of a fully-employed worker and the meagre benefits paid to the sick, unemployed, the injured in industry and the pensioners. But it is a mistake to see only such groups and forget the millions of badly-paid workers in British society. The average weekly male earnings in manufacturing industry are £14 4s. 3d. and, in all industry, £13 11s. 1d. But there are over 1 million workers in retail and wholesale distribution to whom a minimum wage of £10 per week would be a very considerable advance on present standards. Even in the Co-operative movement the minimum wage for a male shop assistant in the Metropolitan Area is £9 3s. 0d.

Or take the 266,224 men of over twenty-one in local government services (excluding policemen and firemen) whose weekly earnings are £10 5s. 10d. Take the millions of women in manufacturing industry where the average earnings are £7 1s. 7d., or in industry as a whole, where they are £7 0s. 8d.

Finally, it is worth noting that, in this "affluent society", about half the working class will not go away for a holiday, and, whilst television is becoming common (as an alternative to the cinema), about 40 per cent of the houses in Britain still lack baths. Surely it is an abuse of language to describe anyone at such a level of living as being affluent.

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Labour and NATO

Sam Russell

BRITAIN'S Labour movement is now in the process of a basic reassessment of its whole foreign and defence policy. Already a number of leading trade unions have debated the vital questions concerned in the continuation of the arms race, Britain's continued dependence on the U.S. through N.A.T.O., and above all the demand that Britain should get out of the nuclear arms race.

This debate will continue until the Labour Party's Annual Conference. But already vigorous attempts are being made by the right-wing leaders of the party to try and reverse the determined swing of the movement against Britain's continued dependence on the U.S., and against the whole N.A.T.O. policy which has hamstrung the Labour movement ever since the late Ernest Bevin took over the anti-Soviet policy enunciated by Winston Churchill in his Fulton speech.

The keystone of Labour's new defence policy is continued support for N.A.T.O.

And leading the demand for the maintenance of N.A.T.O.'s nuclear shackles is the leader of the Labour Party, Mr. Hugh Gaitskell. Faced with the growing movement against N.A.T.O., and with his non-nuclear club a non-starter, faced too with the collapse of Britain's so-called "independent deterrent" in the shape of the Blue Streak missile —another non-starter—Mr. Gaitskell and his friends have tried to erect a whole ideological superstructure to justify the continuation of a policy which, it is being increasingly understood at all levels in the Labour movement, spells suicide for Britain as a nation and for Britain's Labour movement as a politically effective socialist force, nationally and internationally.

On May 23rd, Mr. Gaitskell told the Yarmouth conference of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers that by staying in N.A.T.O. Britain could be "a tremendous force for peace", and claimed that this was the justification for the so-called new defence policy.

But in the Defence debate on March 1st, Mr. Gaitskell put forward very different views and alleged reasons for Britain remaining in N.A.T.O. If Britain left N.A.T.O., he argued, "we should lose such influence as we still possess to prevent Germany negotiating military bases in Spain". In his hunt for arguments with which to bemuse the Labour movement, Mr. Gaitskell has even been reduced to suggesting that West Germany, who was supposedly brought into N.A.T.O. in the first place as a means of controlling her and who was then re-armed, is now the reason why Britain must remain in the alliance.

As for Britain influencing the U.S. by staying in N.A.T.O., every step taken by the U.S. Government in the past ten years has shown that, in the role of junior partner and because of successive surrenders by British Governments, Labour and Tory, British influence has been reduced to *nil*. For the Pentagon experts and the chiefs of the U.S. Strategic Air Command openly treat Britain as an expendable base, or merely as a target destined to take the first blows and to be wiped off the map when the Pentagon's pre-emptive war is started.

The Finger on the Trigger

Mr. Gaitskell knows as well as anyone that the finger on the trigger in N.A.T.O. has always been and will always be an American finger. The Americans have made it clear that N.A.T.O.'s military boss, the so-called Supreme Allied Commander Europe (S.A.C.E.U.R.), starting with General Eisenhower and continuing through Generals Ridgway and Gruenther to the present holder General Norstad, is only responsible to the U.S. President, and that in any case the main nuclear force of U.S. Strategic Air Command is not under N.A.T.O. and never will be. So it is the sheerest hypocrisy to pretend that there is any possibility of any sort of control being exercised over the U.S. inside N.A.T.O. once the Pentagon has decided that the chips are down.

But Mr. Gaitskell's favourite argument for the continuation of Britain's subservience to the U.S. and membership of N.A.T.O. is, of course, the old Red bogy, the alleged and oft-proclaimed "Soviet menace". In his speech to students of Sheffield University on May 27th, 1960, Mr. Gaitskell claimed that: "If the Western alliance gives up its nuclear weapons you put the whole of the West —Europe, ourselves and the rest of the world—at the mercy of the one power left with nuclear weapons, that is the Soviet Union".

Addressing Britain's Imperial Defence College in November 1959, N.A.T.O.'s Secretary-General, M. Spaak, also felt obliged to repeat the hoary myth that N.A.T.O. had come into existence as a "defensive reflex" in order primarily "to halt

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communist expansion in Europe", that "this vast programme of expansion was watched patiently and passively by the great powers of the West", until they decided, after the resignation of the pro-American Ministers in the Czechoslovak Government had been accepted in 1948, that the time had come to form an anti-Soviet alliance. The threat of the atomic bomb in the possession of the U.S. forced the Soviet Union to look to its defences, forced her to catch up and surpass the U.S. in military technique. Yet all the time the Soviet Union repeatedly offered to conclude a disarmament agreement with the West and made various suggestions as to how such an agreement could be concluded, all of which were rejected.

The Myth of "Soviet Aggression"

Today it is generally accepted that the Soviet Union is the last country in the world which would wish to start a war. "The general feeling in the West today", wrote *The Times* in December 1958, "is probably that Russia does not intend any serious aggression in Europe". And it admitted that "the fact that the official estimate of 175 Soviet divisions has not changed since 1947, and has sometimes been used as a bogy to encourage the Western nations to rearm, makes it a little suspect".

A year later, the U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. Herter, arriving in Paris for the annual pre-Christmas N.A.T.O. Ministerial Council meeting, complained that "the sense of crisis seems to have lessened of late". And the *Daily Telegraph*, sympathising with Mr. Herter in his difficulty that "relaxation tends to slacken the sinews", commented that the peoples "are growing to believe that a direct Soviet attack against the West is an unlikely eventuality".

Even such an organisation as the Institute of Strategic Studies in a recent survey by Alistair Buchan, *N.A.T.O. in the 1960's*, states: "Few would argue that the Soviet Union is planning a deliberate and cold-blooded assault upon the N.A.T.O. powers . . . No country has more to gain from peace over the next decade than the Soviet Union. . . ." And the author admits that "a preventive war against the West" by the Soviet Union "must seem even to the most pessimistic a very improbable contingency".

But in face of these and many other estimations of the nature of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union by observers far from friendly to the Soviet system, Mr. Gaitskell is still determined to continue with friends like the so-called Belgian Socialist and present Secretary-General of N.A.T.O., M. Spaak, to brandish the bedraggled bogy of the "Soviet menace", at a time when the very inventors of the lie have discarded it as so patently untrue as to be no longer fit for use among ordinary intelligent people.

And by evoking a non-existent danger of Britain and Europe being left "at the mercy" of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gaitskell in fact places Britain and Europe at the mercy of the maniacs in the U.S. Pentagon, who even before the incident of the U-2 spyplane showed that they are still pursuing the notorious Dulles' brink-of-war policy and the positions-of-strength policy which has brought disaster already. And in case anyone thinks that the Pentagon is a myth, *The Times'* Washington correspondent recently underlined how serious the situation is when he wrote:

"Some idea of the all-powerful influence of the Pentagon on American foreign policy emerges from the censored version of evidence given today by Mr. Gates." This was the evidence given by the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Gates, in the hearing by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the U-2 incident and the world-wide alert of U.S. armed forces ordered by Mr. Gates from Paris after the U.S. had sabotaged the Summit Conference. In the course of his testimony, Mr. Gates admitted that "some commands went further in executing the instructions issued by the Joint Chiefs of Staff than he had anticipated".

Yet it is into the hands of the forces of the Pentagon, who are carrying out such brink-of-war actions with increasing frequency, that Mr. Gaitskell advises the British Labour movement to place its fate and its future. While the Institute of Strategic Studies is forced to admit that "a preventive war against the West" by the Soviet Union "must seem even to the most pessimistic a very improbable contingency", hardly a week goes by without some Pentagon publicist, some U.S. Congressman, some cold-blooded columnist, coolly calculating the advantages to the U.S. of a preventive or "pre-emptive" war against the Soviet Union, unleashing the nuclear forces of Strategic Air Command for what they hope would be a death blow against the Land of Socialism.

The most recent exponent of this policy has been the chairman of the U.S. Appropriations Sub-Committee on Defence, Mr. George H. Mahon, who declared that the U.S. must be able "to launch an attack *before* the would-be aggressor has either hit us or our allies. This is an element of deterrent which the U.S. should not deny itself" (*Time*, May 9). The decision to launch an attack, he added, would have to be taken without declaration of war or debate in Congress because this would give premature warning to the "enemy".

This, not Mr. Gaitskell's anodyne assurances

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about "political control" of N.A.T.O., is the sinister reality of the N.A.T.O. nuclear strategy, a strategy based on getting in first with a nuclear attack against the Soviet Union.

The "Free World" Myth

If the first assumption of Mr. Gaitskell and his N.A.T.O. propagandists, that of the "Soviet menace", is now shown to be a myth, the second assumption that N.A.T.O. consists of a group of countries known collectively as the "free world" is now shown to be an even greater myth, and in examining its future policies towards N.A.T.O. the British Labour movement must give serious consideration to the nature of the regimes which N.A.T.O. is now bolstering. Nor can this consideration be limited merely to N.A.T.O. itself, for the whole system of Western American-controlled alliances, including the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation (S.E.A.T.O.) and the former Baghdad Pact now known as the Central Treaty Organisation (C.E.N.T.O.) must be examined too.

The preamble to the Constitution of N.A.T.O. says its purpose is to "safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law". The mere enunciation of these high-flown sentiments at the present time, and in the light of recent events in South Korea, Turkey, Japan, to say nothing of the events which led to the overthrow of the corrupt regime of Nuri Said in Iraq, shows how phoney the whole N.A.T.O. concept is. The cooking of the electoral books in France to ensure that the French Communists did not get the number of seats to which the votes cast entitled them, the murder of thousands in the Algerian War, the suppressing of basic democratic freedoms in countries like Greece and West Germany, all this makes a mockery of any pretence at defence of democracy.

N.A.T.O.'s last Ministerial Council gathered on May 1st in Istanbul for the meeting the following day, in the midst of mass demonstrations which later led to the downfall of the Menderes Government, but which that pillar of N.A.T.O., the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mr. Zorlu, tried to dismiss as "these unfortunate events which involve a few thousand misguided students". Commenting on the formidable array of tanks and steel-helmeted troops which welcomed N.A.T.O.'s Ministers, the *Guardian* correspondent wrote:

> "By themselves these facts would be enough to suggest to the average outsider, let alone to Turkish colleagues in the defence of the free world through association in N.A.T.O. that democracy is having a bad time in Turkey . . .
>
> "The cynics are pointing out that anybody can at least see with his own eyes that the Turks have a formidable army; Mr. Herter and Mr. Selwyn Lloyd saw a substantial part of it deployed along their route into Istanbul last night".

The Turkish incidents exposed to the world the reality behind the façade with the words "democracy" painted on it. But similar situations exist in many more N.A.T.O., S.E.A.T.O. and C.E.N.T.O. countries, with the forces pledged to "safeguard freedom, democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law" in fact being used to suppress the people's struggle for all these things, as in Turkey, Iran and elsewhere.

Nowhere is the suppression of democratic freedom so fierce as in Western Germany under that great pillar of Western democracy and N.A.T.O., Dr. Adenauer. Apart from the suppression of the German Communist Party, the imprisonment of hundreds of tried and tested anti-Nazi fighters—jailed by the same judges who sat in Hitler's courts—thousands of peace supporters, opponents of nuclear death and opponents of the re-militarisation of Western Germany now taking place under N.A.T.O. auspices are either in jail or face constant persecution.

The rearmament of Western Germany as part, the essential part, of N.A.T.O. has been a godsend to all the forces of black reaction in Western Germany. Yet Mr. Gaitskell still has the temerity to defend the rearmament of Western Germany even when the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, in a debate in the House of Commons last February, gave the game away completely when referring to the campaign against West German rearmament, said: "I can understand people taking part in that campaign who are in favour of disruption of N.A.T.O. and against any alliance between the Federal Republic and this country, and want the Americans to leave Europe and the future arrangements in Europe to be conducted by a consortium of left-wing governments". So here we have it. N.A.T.O. is to prevent the formation of left-wing governments and maintain reaction in power.

Labour's 1952 Policy

In 1952, the Morecambe Conference of the Labour Party took decisions, reaffirmed in the N.E.C.'s resolution at Margate in 1953, which:

> (*a*) Warned the Labour Party "to be on its guard against the danger of supporting anti-working class forces in international relations".
>
> (*b*) Deplored "the condemnation of the risings of the oppressed peoples as Soviet-inspired plots".
>
> (*c*) Opposed "any suggestion that the armaments now being built up to deter aggression should be employed to impose on any other country changes in Government or internal policies".

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(*d*) Declared that "we can best serve the cause of peace by sticking to our distinctive Socialist principles and refusing to subordinate them to American, Russian or any other pressures".

The 1956 Conference pledged the Labour Party to a policy of disengagement which included taking West Germany out of N.A.T.O. and East Germany out of the Warsaw Pact, with a European Security Treaty based on the U.N. Charter in which Britain and the Soviet Union would co-operate in establishing a nuclear-free zone, reduce armaments and ensure peace.

But N.A.T.O.'s Supreme Commander, General Norstad, has stated quite clearly his complete opposition to any form of disengagement in Europe, and even the Prime Minister, Mr. Macmillan, was obliged to go back on the promise he made in the communiqué issued after his visit to Moscow, that he would study the creation of such a zone in Central Europe, because General Norstad cracked the whip and said he would not have it.

While Britain continues in N.A.T.O. and while she continues to be a military base for the U.S., she will be a party to every one of those things that the 1952 resolution warned against. Only the removal of U.S. bases from Britain can provide the opportunity for a beginning to be made on the implementation of that Labour Party policy.

Yet, if the present collection of dictatorships in N.A.T.O., S.E.A.T.O. and C.E.N.T.O. are not enough, a new ally in the fight for "freedom and democracy" is now being canvassed with even greater ardour than before—General Franco, the fascist dictator of Spain, ally of Hitler and Mussolini in World War II and murderer of the Spanish Republic, who still holds thousands in his jails, and orders fresh arrests of democrats, even those who, as in Barcelona recently, dared to sing their national hymn.

While until recently the British Government has maintained an official position opposed to the admission of Franco to N.A.T.O., that position has undergone an important change. The Foreign Office now states that it is not opposed to the matter being discussed in N.A.T.O., where presumably a "democratic" decision will be arrived at in the knowledge that the Americans have for some time been agitating for the admission of this fine democrat and that the West German Defence Minister, Herr Strauss, has been threatening to establish bases in Spain unless he is given them elsewhere.

And presumably the admission of Franco to N.A.T.O. would add to Mr. Gaitskell's certainty that such an organisation was ideally equipped to defend Western civilisation and cultural values against the "Soviet menace".

"Wider still and wider"

But this is not all. There is growing demand for the functions of N.A.T.O. to be extended to meet the alleged "Communist menace" in Asia and Africa. M. Spaak, in his address to the Imperial Defence College referred to earlier, argued that while according to him the "Atlantic Alliance has achieved its aim and is therefore definitely a success, the Communist threat has spread both geographically and ideologically. It is no longer confined to Europe. It is at least as great a danger to Asia and Africa. What would be the use of all this in the long run, if Europe were to be outflanked in the Middle East and Africa?" So any supporter of N.A.T.O. must be prepared to see plans put forward soon for the extension of the system in some form to cover even larger sections of the world.

This "wider still and wider" philosophy for N.A.T.O. was also put forward by Mr. Herter at the December, 1959, Ministerial Council, when he declared: "In 1970 the Western objective would still be the same but technological problems might be very different". And proposing the adoption of a ten-year plan for N.A.T.O. he added: "N.A.T.O. must develop a worldwide view. Planning should also recognise the special responsibility of the powers with world-wide interests".

So the perspective already is that a pact, originally planned for twenty years only, should be extended indefinitely after 1970, and that an alliance, originally limited geographically to the Atlantic, stretched conveniently to include Turkey, will eventually have a "world-wide view" with all the consequences of such a policy.

Yet attempts are being made to sell every twist and turn of American policy, every attempt to tighten the American stranglehold, as in some way consistent with Labour Party policy. Last February, for example, Labour's shadow Defence Minister, Mr. George Brown, claimed that the Labour Party had always supported the view that Britain must keep four divisions and a tactical air force in Europe so long as N.A.T.O. lasts. This view was vigorously refuted by 14 Labour M.P.s who stated in a letter to the *Daily Herald*:

> "No such decision has ever been taken by the Labour Party Conference. If Mr. Brown or anyone else put any such proposition before the conference today, he would be overwhelmingly repudiated. A large and growing minority in the Party believes N.A.T.O. *is useless;* because Russia does not want war.
>
> "*An obstacle* to political settlement, since most of the N.A.T.O. Governments including ours, regard the preservation of N.A.T.O. as an end in itself, for the sake of which they reject disengagement, the only possible basis of agreement

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with Russia. A *danger* to peace because N.A.T.O. is being used as an excuse to provide the Adenauer regime with nuclear weapons to back up its claim to over-run Eastern Germany and carve up Poland".

This is the basic reality of the whole N.A.T.O. policy, and the danger and futility of such a policy has been made even clearer by the recent fiasco over the Blue Streak missile and its replacement by the Skybolt, a doubtful starter and not even scheduled to be available before 1964-65.

Nuclear costs

The most recent visit of Britain's present Defence Minister to Washington, Mr. Harold Watkinson, resulted in the Skybolt announcement. But some three years ago, the then Defence Minister, Mr. Duncan Sandys, made a shopping trip across the Atlantic and bought some fifty Thor missiles which were supposed to be the latest thing in delivery of the so-called "nuclear deterrent". But already the Thor missiles are obsolete and their cost to Britain, added to that of a long list of weapons with fancy names like Fireflash and Firestreak, Thunderbird and Bloodhound, Blue Streak, Blue Steel and Blue Water, is reckoned to total over £660 million—enough to have built 1,000 primary schools, 500 secondary schools and about 90 hospitals.

But even more serious is the fact that the Skybolt that Mr. Watkinson has brought back with him will make Britain even more dependent on the United States. At conservative estimates Britain is taking a £100 million gamble in joining in its production, and Mr. Watkinson himself has admitted that he is not 100 per cent sure that it will work, if and when it ever goes into production. Nobody can be sure for at least a year that it will be of the slightest value, and if the Americans drop the idea, Britain will have to drop it too.

The joint Anglo-American communiqué issued at the end of Mr. Watkinson's visit shows that many matters other than missiles were discussed between Mr. Watkinson and the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Gates. It disclosed that in their deal over the Skybolt the two Defence Ministers only confirmed "the arrangements agreed to in principle between President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Macmillan" during the Camp David talks last March—which were supposed to be devoted to ensuring the success of the summit conference.

Mr. Watkinson was first invited to visit the U.S. during last December's Ministerial Council Meeting of N.A.T.O. in Paris, where he distinguished himself by reviving the late Mr. Dulles' demand that the West "must be able to negotiate from strength with the Russians". To do this he called for the creation of a series of new weapons, called the "N.A.T.O. family of weapons", for further military standardisation. This attitude endeared him to Mr. Gates, who promptly invited him to the U.S. where, according to the communiqué, he was given extensive briefings at the Pentagon, visited U.S. Strategic Air Command headquarters as well as inspecting the Douglas plant making the Skybolt, and the Lockheed plant making the Polaris missiles—another candidate for Mr. Watkinson's shopping list.

Before he went to the N.A.T.O. meeting last December, Mr. Watkinson visited West Germany to contact his opposite number, Herr Strauss, where he noted "with satisfaction the close association of the British and West German armed forces", and came to an agreement for joint production and development of a number of new weapons. Herr Strauss followed Mr. Watkinson to the U.S., where he was particularly interested in the Polaris missile—with what object was indicated by *The Times*' Bonn correspondent, who reported:

> "The new Polaris now being designed for launching from mobile land ramps is reported to have a range of about 1,500 miles. With it the Bundeswehr could overshoot Moscow and reach well into the central areas of the Soviet Union. It would be a formidable addition to the Bundeswehr's already impressive array of missiles".

"Balance of Strategic Power"

Just how dangerous for Britain were the plans discussed by the unholy trinity of Defence Ministers, Gates, Watkinson and Strauss, was further disclosed when it was announced that at the request of the U.S. Air Force, R.A.F. Bomber Command is to have a proportion of its planes constantly airborne, just as in the U.S. Strategic Air Command. In December 1957, Mr. Aneurin Bevan denounced U.S. H-bomber patrols as "a state of mobilisation one step short of war" and demanded that they should stop. There has been no protest from Mr. Gaitskell at the latest announcement.

It was significant, and a complete exposure of Western hypocrisy in the disarmament discussions, that Mr. Watkinson signed his new agreement with the Americans, for the acquisition of what he hoped would be new weapons for the delivery of nuclear warheads against the Soviet Union, on the very day when the ten-nation committee in Geneva started discussing the new Soviet proposals for complete and total disarmament.

The West is claiming that its aim is to maintain what is euphemistically called "a stable balance of strategic power". It is in fact a cloak for the continuation of the arms race. It is esti-

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mated that the plans for the continuation of this race will send Britain's arms bill rocketing from about £1,500 million a year to at least £2,000 million a year.

All the plans for continued British participation in N.A.T.O., whether they are disguised under plans for the so-called "N.A.T.O. deterrent" or for "N.A.T.O. political control", would in fact not involve any sharing of American control over the warheads of nuclear weapons.

The *Guardian* stated the position quite brutally as long ago as July, 1959, as follows:

> "President de Gaulle believes that the effective decisions are taken by the Americans and British by themselves and only reported to the North Atlantic Council. He is mistaken: the vital decisions are more often taken by the Americans alone. . . . To suppose that British bombs give us a stronger voice is a delusion . . . The fighter-bomber squadrons must be off the ground in an emergency in the shortest time and neither General Norstad nor any other responsible commander can wait for political consultation. How can you ask a government its views in fifteen minutes? If nations or alliances equip themselves with weapons requiring such high-speed use they must be realistic about how decisions are taken. In effect the North Atlantic Council has already taken its decision in approving General Norstad's plans. These provide for a number of eventualities, some of which must call for action quicker than others".

The only answer for Labour to such terms, and there is no doubt that they are the terms, is the repudiation of an alliance which places such burdens on allies, and there is evidence that growing sections of the Labour movement are coming round to this point of view. For continued membership of N.A.T.O. places Britain at the mercy of the Pentagon and the prophets of preventive war.

A sane alternative practical policy exists. It is a policy based on the United Nations Charter, for the creation of a European Security Pact within the framework of the United Nations; for Britain to renounce the manufacture and use of nuclear weapons; for the speed up of disarmament negotiations on the basis of the new Soviet proposals, for the liquidation of all foreign bases.

Such a policy would ensure that Britain *would* exercise a powerful influence for peace in the world, would not be restricted by the U.S. finger on the trigger, nor tied to the U.S. so completely as to place Britain in deadly danger.

The ending of Britain's association with N.A.T.O. and all that it implies would immensely facilitate fruitful negotiations at a new Summit meeting, and could be the beginning of a real era of peace in Europe.

Pressure groups in Britain

R. Falber

POLITICIANS and political theorists in Britain have usually adopted a condescending attitude towards the intensive lobbying by pressure groups which is a feature of American political activity at the level of government and they have contrasted it with the "Sovereignty of Parliament" in Britain.

However, truth will out, and it is significant that in the past few years there have been several studies of the activities of British pressure groups and lobbies in serious political journals, and at least three books have been written on the subject.[1] Some of the authors are American sociologists plainly bent on proving that we have nothing to learn from their country in the matter.

Any study of pressure group activity must be conducted against the background of the steady process of erosion of Parliamentary power throughout the twentieth century and the growing concentration of power in the hands of the Cabinet.

This has been accompanied by a growth in the power of the Executive, i.e., the government departments in the charge of Ministers. The basis for this development has been the enormous increase in the economic activity of the state during the imperialist epoch and the consequent additional administrative responsibility devolving upon the ministries, together with the growth of "delegated legislation", i.e., legislation made by civil servants through statutory instruments.

The concentration of power in the hands of the Cabinet and Executive, combined with the narrowing of the differences in policy between the two major political parties, is closely connected with the growth in the activities and power of the

[1] *British Pressure Groups*, J. D. Stewart, 1958.
Anonymous Empire, S. E. Finer, 1958.
Pressure Group Politics, H. Eckstein, 1960.

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pressure groups and lobbyists, and the particular forms this has taken.

What are Pressure Groups?

The formal definition provided is: "Organised groups possessing both formal structure and real common interests, in so far as they seek to influence the process of government". (Stewart, p.1).

There are broadly speaking two categories of pressure groups. The "promotional" groups, such as the League against Cruel Sports, the R.S.P.C.A., or the Howard League for Penal Reform, all of which pursue a particular cause. Their aims are publicly proclaimed and pressed upon Parliament and the Government in a variety of ways. But neither their most fervent supporters nor rabid opponents would claim that they have significantly influenced the procedure and pattern of government in Britain.

The second category, the "interest" groups, are another matter entirely. While the Conservative Party and Government represent the class interests of the monopoly capitalists as a whole, these pressure groups represent particular economic interests within the general class interests, and their numbers and activity are a powerful influence on the whole political structure of Britain.

There are 2,500 trade associations in Britain, and the number of manufacturers' trade associations has grown from 500 in 1913 to 1,300 today. Many are organised in the Federation of British Industries, which grew from a few firms and 15 associations in 1913, to 7,533 firms and 283 associations in 1958, or the National Union of Manufacturers with more than 5,000 firms and 60 trade associations. Many smaller traders and retailers are organised in local Chambers of Commerce which are federated in the Associated British Chambers of Commerce with nearly 100 local Chambers of Commerce, incorporating 66,000 firms and approximately 25,000 manufacturers.

The National Farmers Union organises nine tenths of the farmers, and in the professions such bodies as the British Medical Association and the Law Society are powerful pressure groups. The trade unions too must be classed as pressure groups, and their activities in this field will be dealt with separately later in this article.

This vast complexity of organisations and the interests they represent, constituting the Lobby or pressure group system in Britain, has become a factor of increasing importance in the whole political fabric of the country. The pressure groups can, when occasion demands, mount a powerful and expensive public campaign; they are strongly represented in the House of Commons and, perhaps most important of all, they have a multiplicity of links with the Ministries and civil service.

The activities of the pressure groups at the executive level are devoted towards influencing the drafting of Statutory Instruments and Bills due to be presented to Parliament by the Government, and day to day negotiation on issues arising out of existing legislation.

The increase in volume of delegated legislation is undoubtedly the main reason for the considerable concentration of pressure exerted on the Ministries. It has long been customary in Britain to enact legislation conferring powers on the Ministries to make additional legislation dealing with the practical operation of particular sections of the original Act. Of the 80 Sections of the National Health Service Act, half require subordinate legislation, and these include the more important sections covering administration and conditions of service. In the first three years following the passage of the Act, nearly 150 Statutory Instruments were made.

Pressure Groups and the Executive

In 1900 Government Departments made 174 general legislative rules. By the 1920s around 400 such rules were being made annually, and since 1945 the annual total has been over 1,000 and it exceeded 1,500 in 1948. These figures are an expression of the vast expansion of the State apparatus in the imperialist age. The particularly steep increase since the end of the war owes much to the economic and social welfare measures taken by the 1945-1951 Labour Government; and it must be added that the capitalist character of their nationalisation, and the preservation of professional and business interests in the expanded social services, left the doors wide open for the activities of the pressure groups.

There is reason to believe that the Civil Servants who play an important part in drafting Parliamentary Bills prefer legislation framed in general terms, because this leaves the way open for powers to be delegated to them to introduce subordinate legislation through statutory instruments. Certainly the pressure groups and lobbyists prefer this state of affairs because it allows the maximum scope for their activities.

The Select Committee on Delegated Legislation (1952-3) sent to Government departments a questionnaire asking the procedure adopted in framing delegated legislation. The following extracts from the replies show the close liaison between the departments and the interests.

> *Ministry of Civil Aviation:* "A proposed new regulation is first discussed with any interested bodies".

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Ministry of Education: "No body of regulations is ever put out without full consultation with outside bodies concerned".

Ministry of Transport: "In many cases the Minister is required by Statute, before making regulations, to consult with representative organisations, and it is settled policy in almost all other cases before making general regulations, to consult with the bodies conerned".

Board of Trade: "Regulations were made . . . often after detailed consultation with the interests concerned".

The Ministries of Labour and Food and the Home and Scottish Office replied in similar terms. This list does not include the Ministry of Health, whose close and intimate connection with the medical bodies, particularly the British Medical Association has been described with a wealth of detail by Eckstein. Nor does it include the Ministry of Agriculture which has been described as being "locked in a continuous embrace with the National Farmers' Union".

The pressure groups representing the most powerful sections of the employers also have important connections with the Treasury. Their biggest interest of course is in connection with the Budget. While the need for secrecy rules out the possibility of prior consultation, efforts are made before the Budget to press upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer the views of big business. Over the years the Association of British Chambers of Commerce has developed a routine procedure in preparation for the Budget. Its first step is the despatch of a letter or memorandum to the Chancellor followed by a deputation. The Association's memorandum always receives a good deal of prominence in the press and on the B.B.C. news bulletins.

But "more important, because more likely to be effective, is the meeting that takes place—also before the budget—with officials of the Inland Revenue Department to discuss the more technical problems which fall within the Finance Bill" (Stewart, p. 62). The technical proposals on taxation are also submitted by the Government to the Council of the Federation of British Industries.

Clearly it is the rule rather than the exception for the various employers' organisations, professional bodies and also the trade unions to be fully consulted before bills and statutory instruments are drafted, or other important measures initiated.

With new legislation, it is customary for the pressure groups to be consulted as soon as drafting commences. Indeed, it is considered to be the most important stage for the pressure groups. "The appropriate place to challenge legislation (and sometimes delegated legislation) might be thought to be Parliament; for it is there that the formal process of enactment takes place. But the group has the opportunity to raise matters before a Bill is drafted for presentation to Parliament. Representation can be made at this point with the minimum of effort and the maximum hope of success. A Minister is more likely to be responsive to a suggestion made before his mind is declared, than to accept it when doing so would involve withdrawing from a publicly stated position" (Stewart, p. 30).

The murkier side of pressure group activities is the numerous informal relationships built up by the pressure groups with Government departments as a medium of carrying on business. Stewart says: "This relationship is normally informal. There is no deliberate secrecy about it; it is merely that it is not necessary to its continuance that public attention should be drawn to it or its details". Sir Norman Kipping, Director General of the Federation of British Industries, was quite outspoken about the closeness of the connection and the extent to which the ministries take the initiative: "Almost every day the F.B.I. is approached by one or another Government department for advice".

Business Representatives

In 1948 following the scandals brought to light by the Lynsky Tribunal, the Labour Government set up a Committee to investigate the question of intermediaries between the Government and the public. The Committee's Report gave a picture of the close and friendly personal contacts between the pressure groups and the Government and the ready access enjoyed by their various officers to their opposite numbers in the Government departments. The class character of this contact is vividly described by Eckstein: "There is in Great Britain an 'old boy' network of men who have all been to certain public schools, who have similar tastes and accents, who belong to the same clubs, occupy similar preferred positions on the social stratification scale, move in the same social circles, and are for all these reasons close intimates. Undoubtedly this network exists, and, more often than not, it moves the wheels of Government" (Eckstein, p. 90).

Apologists of the British system of Government argue that this relationship is essential to carrying on the Government, because the pressure groups provide Government departments with technical knowledge and experience lacked by civil servants, and that "without it, Parliament would be presented with unworkable Bills" (Stewart, p. 17).

To say this is to pretend that those who represent big business are a race apart from the civil servants. The boards of the nationalised industries are packed with big business representatives, and

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former employees of big business are well represented at all levels of management.

That Government departments depend upon business firms and associations for technical help is indisputable. But that it should be so is strange, especially in view of the constant stream of retired civil servants into the banks, industry and commerce. Some instances of this at the top level are the late Lord Waverley (Sir John Anderson), ex-Governor of Bengal, who became a director of Imperial Chemical Industries and Vickers; Sir Henry Wilson Smith, a Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Defence 1947-8 and Second Secretary to the Treasury 1948-51, who became a part-time member of the National Coal Board and deputy chairman of Cory Bros. & Co. Ltd., and Powell Duffryn Ltd. besides being a director of Guest, Keen and Nettlefolds Ltd.—he was chairman of five other firms; and S. P. Chambers, a former Secretary to the Board of Inland Revenue and Commissioner of Inland Revenue, who is now also a part-time member of the N.C.B., devoting the rest of his time to his duties as Deputy-Chairman of I.C.I. and being a director of the National Provincial Bank, the Royal Insurance Co. Ltd. and five other big firms. In addition there are types like Sir Cecil M. Weir, a director of four important companies, who during the war was Controller-General of Factory and Storage Premises 1941-2 and Director-General of Equipment and Stores in the Ministry of Supply, 1942-6; Sir Cecil, a key figure in British business, is "an excellent example of the businessman who became completely integrated with State administrative work during the war" (Clive Jenkins, *Power at the Top,* p. 133).

At the lower levels it occurs more frequently because "in the altered circumstances of the managed Welfare State—Labour or Tory—State policy decisions have become more vitally important and the decision can easily be influenced one way or other by judicious summing up". ("The Apotheosis of the Dilettante" by Thomas Balogh —*The Establishment,* p. 94).

Having made themselves indispensable to the carrying on of the business of government, the pressure groups have used their position to advance the interests of the particular group of the ruling class they represent. It would be interesting to know whether technical information and advice is sought from working class organisations on matters other than labour relations and safety in industry. But technical information covers a wide ground. It might for example cover information on rents and how the Rent Act is working out. In these circumstances would the Ministry of Housing and Local Government seek the help of the National Association of Tenants and Residents as well as the National Federation of Property Owners?

Marx described the state as "the executive committee of the bourgeoisie". But the bourgeoisie have moved in on their executive Committee to make certain that the state fulfils what they regard as its sacred trust—the growth of profits. The effect however is to reduce the power of Parliament. Not infrequently Ministers prevent members from pressing their point with the formula "important discussions are taking place and it would not be in the public interest to make a statement at this moment". If and when a statement is made at the conclusion of the important discussions, Parliament usually finds itself confronted with a *fait accompli.*

Pressure Groups and Parliament

Information about the M.P.s' connections with business organisations is not always easy to come by. Stewart in an appendix lists the M.P.s in the 1951 Parliament who had official or recognised connections with the groups at some time between 1951 and 1955.

The National Chamber of Trade had forty M.P.s among its honorary Vice-Presidents. The National Union of Manufacturers had connections with four M.P.s; the Associated British Chambers of Commerce with five and the Building Societies associations with four. Amongst the other organisations with similar contacts were the Country Landowners Association, the Federation of British Industries, the Brewers Society, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, the Chamber of Shipping, the Iron and Steel Federation and the National Farmers Union.

All of these interests have retained their connections with the Parliament elected in October 1959 and the additional interests represented include the National Federation of Property Owners, the Institute of Bankers, the Institute of Directors, the Newspaper Society and the Pre-Stressed Concrete Group.

The M.P.s having connections with the pressure groups put down questions to Ministers, and sometimes, when they are fortunate in the Private Members' ballot, they initiate legislation. Many promote the interests of the particular group with which they are associated through the standing all-party groups in the House of Commons, like the Roads Group; the numerous *ad hoc* all-party meetings convened in the House; or the specialised committees into which the two main Parliamentary parties are organised. But perhaps their most important function is moving amendments to Government Bills.

When the Restrictive Practices Bill was pub-

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lished in 1956 a joint Committee of the Federation of British Industries, National Union of Manufacturers and Associated British Chambers of Commerce circularised all M.P.s with a joint memorandum criticising the Bill and making suggestions for its amendment. More than 60 of the amendments eventually tabled to the Bill emanated from a joint committee of these three organisations.

The interests supply M.P.s with briefs for the debate, and during the course of it their representative will sit in the gallery of the House of Commons, indicating by a nod or a sign approval or otherwise of the points made. Sometimes an M.P. can be seen to hurry to the lobby or public gallery for a brief consultation with the representative of the interest he is associated with.

One of the greatest concentrations of interests was the passing of the Transport Bill (1946-7). There was no secret about the fact that hundreds of amendments to the Bill put down by the Opposition came from the interests via the Conservative Central Office. The port employers and shipping interests amendments were mostly moved by J. S. MacLay, himself a shipowner, and the Chamber of Shipping subsequently publicly expressed their thanks for his "unsparing efforts to safeguard the interests of coastwise shipping". The Road Haulage Association, who previously had launched a noisy public anti-nationalisation campaign costing £100,000, bombarded the M.P.s with letters and telegrams, politely worded for opponents of the Bill and peremptory demands to its supporters. When the Bill was before the Standing Committee, the Road Haulage Association briefed the Opposition. Its representative was constantly in attendance at the House and available for consultation with the M.P.s. During this period he spent nearly all his mornings in the House sitting outside the committee room, briefing M.P.s in the corridor when necessary. On occasions he was also summoned to the private meetings of the Conservative Transport Committee.

Transport users and traders added their weight to the pressure via a joint committee which included the F.B.I., N.U.M., A.B.C.C., and the British Road Federation. Via its members, this committee circularised the M.P.s suggesting amendments to the Bill. The Conservative Party's Parliamentary Committee worked over the material and selected amendments and speakers. With the result "it may confidently be said that no significant proposal or grievance of any of the affected interests failed to be put forward; that the Conservative Parliamentary Party was able to make a disciplined and well-instructed fight; and that while the haulier and railway interests did not gain any advantages, the traders and shipping interests were able to get nearly all they demanded". (Finer, p. 69).

A particularly blatant case of successful pressure by business interests was the work of the Road Haulage Association in connection with road transport denationalisation. Its *ad hoc* committee had ten meetings with the Minister, Mr. Lennox Boyd, besides several meetings with M.P.s. Two of the three demands in its memorandum were incorporated in the Government's Bill, after the Minister had attended a meeting of the Hauliers National Council to discuss the Bill, and following representations by the Road Haulage Association the Bill was issued in a revised form, whereupon the Association drew up a revised list of amendments.

Even these few examples show that Parliament swarms with the spokesmen of sectional groups. Even if Conservative Members are frequently coy about revealing their connections with "interest" groups, their speeches and behaviour in Parliament often give the game away. For example, Finer claims that by comparing members' amendments with literature put out by the various lobbies he was able to trace the origin among the respective interest groups of every significant amendment tabled to the Bill of 1946-7.

Pressure Groups and Public Campaigns

It is not usual for pressure groups to indulge in public campaigns. They prefer to work via contacts with the Ministries and the House of Commons. Nevertheless, when occasion demands, they can and do mount a very expensive campaign of press advertisements, posters, meetings and other publicity.

The issue which has led to the maximum public campaigning is nationalisation. Reference has already been made to the campaign of the Road Hauliers Association against transport nationalisation. There is a constant stream of propaganda against nationalisation in the press and on radio and television, and the right-wing Labour leaders vie with business interests in opposing nationalisation.

This is not considered sufficient by the monopoly capitalists, and they have several times, particularly when a General Election was in the offing, launched powerful and costly public campaigns, taking over many of the techniques evolved by high powered American publicity experts. The Mr. Cube campaign in 1950 against the nationalisation of sugar, was directed by Tate and Lyle and the Aims of Industry, who budgeted to spend £250,000. Whether or not the campaign

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was responsible, the fact is that the Labour Government elected in 1950 did not nationalise sugar.

Immediately prior to the 1959 General Election there was the Hurry Survey on nationalisation, which was estimated to have cost £700,000, and the expensive campaign against steel nationalisation carried on by the steel firms.[2] The T.U.C.'s recommendation that there should be some restriction on this type of campaign, whose expenditure does not come within the limits laid down in the Representation of the Peoples Act, is certainly timely and welcome. What would be equally welcome is a large scale publicity campaign by the Trade Unions explaining their aims and policies in order to counter the crescendo of anti-Trade Union propaganda in the press, cinema, theatre and on the television.

The need for this is emphasised by Finer, who after dealing with the publicity campaigns of the powerful monopoly interests says: "There is little to correspond with this kind of propaganda on the Labour side" (Finer, p. 82).

There are also the expensive propaganda campaigns conducted by the Iron and Steel Federation and Imperial Chemical Industries, which have mainly a general political and prestige purpose. These, too, are invaluable as background for the day-to-day activities of the pressure groups and the building up of contacts with Members of Parliament.

The Trade Unions

To help in covering up the activity of pressure groups which represent particular business interests and aims to increase profits, the trade unions are sometimes spoken of as pressure groups, although their connections with the Ministries serve opposite class interests. Unlike many of the Tory M.P.s associated with the pressure groups, the trade unions make no attempt to cover their connections with Parliament.

The report of the General Council of the T.U.C. reveals innumerable contacts with Government Departments. The trade unions are among the interests consulted when legislation affecting them is drafted; they negotiate with Ministries on a variety of questions, and they frequently make known their views on wider issues in the field of education, pensions, national insurance and the social services.

While formally they measure up in nearly every respect to the business and industrial pressure groups, there is a marked contrast in their activities. The basis of the T.U.C's attitude was expressed after the Tories had regained a Parliamentary majority in the 1951 General Election. They said: "It is our long standing practice to seek to work amicably with whatever Government is in power and through consultation jointly with Ministers and with the other side of industry to find practical solutions to the social and economic problems facing this country. There need be no doubt, therefore, of the attitude of the T.U.C. towards the new Government".

It is very doubtful indeed whether any of the business interests would so fully commit themselves to cooperation with a Labour Government. Indeed even the 1945-51 Labour Government was not always able to secure their co-operation, and in 1946 the British Iron and Steel Federation refused to join the Control Board, whose establishment was an important part of the Labour Government's proposals for the machinery of steel nationalisation, unless the Government withdrew its plan to use the Board to prepare the way for nationalisation. The Federation won its point when the Government announced that it would not be the function of the Board, or those members of it drawn from the steel industry, to advise in connection with plans for public ownership. This retreat undoubtedly had important consequences on the timing of the steel nationalisation bill and the preparations for the takeover. In 1948 after the nationalisation decision all the non-trade union members of the Board withdrew in protest. An equally tough attitude by the trade unions to the Conservative Government would be welcomed by the overwhelming majority of the members of the Labour movement.

The General Council of the T.U.C. and the separate trade unions frequently use their numerous contacts with Government departments to good effect, and help their members to derive important benefits. Yet it is significant that while the various writers on the activities of the pressure groups give several examples of big business organisations gaining victories through the activities enumerated, they do not record a single instance of the trade unions significantly amending Government decisions or legislation, and certainly the picture given of business pressure group activities is one of much greater toughness in negotiation with the ministries.

Many trade union M.P.s perform valuable services in the House of Commons by raising questions. Mr. Richard Marsh, who was successful in the Private Members' ballot, introduced a

[2] It is now known that big business organisations spent £1,435,000 on anti-nationalisation campaigns between October 1958 and the October 1959 General Election.

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very important Bill on office workers' conditions. But the activity of trade union M.P.s is hampered by a number of factors. First, the wide area of basic agreement between the two parties and the manner in which Labour's Front Bench frowns upon any real effort to really oppose the Government. Secondly, it has to be said that the trade unions do not send their leading representatives to Parliament. Of course the ban prohibiting Communists from being nominated as Labour candidates by the trade unions is sometimes an important reason for this, but there is a general tendency for the most able trade unionists to devote all their time to industrial matters, and for the second line officials to be put forward for the Parliamentary Panel, and in some cases a seat in Parliament is regarded as a reward for long service.

Third, there are certain inhibitions in T.U. circles against using Parliament to air their demands on matters not involving legislation. Invariably in a big industrial dispute the state apparatus, particularly its propaganda organs, comes down heavily on the side of the employers, but rarely do the trade unions use their contact with Parliament as a means for putting their case before the public.

The general ineptness of the trade union representatives in Parliament must have the effect of weakening their bargaining power in negotiations with the Ministries. Civil Servants negotiating with the powerful employers' organisations are conscious of the fact that if the employers feel that an attempt is being made to cheat them of what they regard as their just dues, they will instruct their contacts in Parliament to put the heat on the Minister—the trade unions do not appear to present any such threat.

Therefore while the trade unions have the formal structure of pressure groups there is a marked difference in their effectiveness compared with the employers and business organisations. Even if due allowance is made for the fact that in a capitalist state the dice must always be loaded against the workers' organisations, the basic reason for this is the reluctance of the trade union movement to use its full power and the strength of the over eight million organised workers to press home its demands.

Pressure Groups and the Two-Party System

It is sometimes stated that pressure groups arose in response to the inadequacies of the two party system and in a measure compensate for this. In a special issue of *Political Quarterly*, R. T. McKenzie said: "It is in part, one suspects, because of the tacit recognition of the enormous and legitimate role played by the organised interests, that the public acquiesces in the apparent anomalies of our electoral system".

The fact that pressure groups are strongest in Britain and the United States, where the political systems are dominated by two parties, cannot of course be ignored. But to say that the activities of the pressure groups compensate for the anomalies of the electoral system is sheer nonsense. The groups possessing the greatest influence and readiest access to the Ministries are those representing monopoly capitalism, and it is an indisputable fact that the electoral system is heavily weighted in favour of the political party—the Conservative Party—which represents precisely these interests in Parliament. What is more, the major anomaly of the electoral system, the handicap it imposes on minority parties, is in no way compensated for by the pressure groups. Mackenzie should try out his theory on the pensioners who miss having someone like William Gallacher to speak for them in Parliament.

The situation where important decisions are taken by Government departments in consultation with and under the pressure groups answerable to nobody but themselves, and pursuing solely their own selfish aims, makes nonsense of the theory that "Parliament is Sovereign". This much is tacitly admitted by Mackenzie: "Pressure groups taken together are a far more important channel of communications than the parties for the transmission of political ideas from the mass of the citizenry to their rulers".

As they have grown in numbers and power the relationship of the pressure groups to the two Parliamentary parties has become more complex. It may have been correct at one time to say that the trade unions and cooperatives were associated with the Labour Party, while the business interests were associated with the Conservatives. But there has been a growth of bi-partisanship in this field. One of the most important groups to develop relations with both parties is the National Farmers Union—traditionally, the N.F.U. is associated with the Conservative Party, and in rural areas it pressed for its members to be nominated as Conservative candidates. It had a very large political fund, and before the war it operated what was virtually a form of sponsorship of Conservative candidates in rural districts. Since 1944, it has concentrated on building relations with both parties via their parliamentary committees dealing with agricultural matters.

But the tendency is growing in trade associations. The Glass Manufacturers Federation has a parliamentary group with members from both sides of the House. Stewart states that other groups "are prevented by nothing save force of

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habit from making regular approaches to the Labour Party's parliamentary committees. In the future more groups are likely to follow the example of the N.F.U. and use contacts with the parliamentary committees of both Parties as the basis for permanent relationships" (p. 160).

Many Labour M.P.s will not react to such approaches unfavourably. G. R. Strauss said that "they render Parliament an invaluable and essential service". (*Political Quarterly*, Jan.-March 1958).

If the Right Wing get their way and the Labour Party abandons Clause 4 there could well be a rush of manufacturers' and traders' associations to build up contacts with Labour M.P.s. One cannot help wondering whether constitutional considerations will cause the M.P.s to reject advances from outside interests.

While the pressure groups welcome a narrowing of the differences between the parties and would be willing to avail themselves to a greater extent of the services of Labour M.P.s it would be wrong to suppose that they are indifferent to whether there is a Conservative or Labour majority at Westminster. Here and there a group may kick over the traces, but the overwhelming majority of the business pressure groups are firmly aligned with the Conservative Party. They contribute handsomely to its funds, sometimes seek the adoption of a representative as a Conservative candidate, and in elections place vehicles, space on hoardings, office equipment and other facilities at the disposal of Conservative agents.

The integration of the pressure groups representing big business with the government departments has strengthened monopoly capitalism's stranglehold on the state apparatus, with the result that government is more openly conducted by big business for big business.

The process of the entrenchment of the pressure groups has gone on irrespective of whether there was a Labour or a Tory Government. Of course they adjust their tactics in accordance with whatever party has a majority in Parliament, but the essential character of their relations with government departments remains unchanged. The extent to which Government departments have come to rely upon them means that while the formal decision might be taken by the Minister, the advice tendered him by the civil servants has come from a pressure group. A future Labour Government could well find itself in considerable difficulties if the pressure groups refused to co-operate. Of course a government which was determined to break the powers of monopoly capitalism would not be faced with such a problem; it would call upon the power of the organised workers to break the pressure groups and the interests they represent. But a Labour Government operating a policy of managed capitalism, based upon a mixed economy, would find that the pressure groups could call the tune in very many directions.

Whether the present leadership of the Labour Party is concerned at such a possibility is a matter for speculation. There is little contradiction between the activities of the pressure groups and their ideology of buying the best brains to run nationalised industry, or the concept that the managerial elements, who it is claimed are the real controllers of industry, are doing a splendid job, and should be subjected to a minimum of interference. It is perhaps not without significance that while the growth of pressure group activities and influence has attracted the attention of a number of bourgeois sociologists and writers, Labour writers on government virtually ignore the subject. It is not difficult to see why this should be so, for any study of the pressure groups would explode the sedulously cultivated ideas about the "neutrality" of the state machine, and might make it more difficult to persuade workers to limit their political activity to voting every so often.

Working Class Pressure

Is it possible for the working class movement to emulate the employers' pressure groups and use its connections with the state machine to better effect? Of course in a capitalist society the state apparatus functions for the benefit of the capitalist class. Nevertheless within the limits imposed by the class character of society it is possible for the working class to wring more concessions from the state apparatus if its full resources are brought to bear upon Parliament, the Government and its departments.

During recent years the rank and file of the movement has developed very effectively the mass lobby of Parliament. Thousands of trades unionists have at various times lobbied the M.P.s on German Rearmament, the abolition of the manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons, in defence of their jobs, against repression in the colonies, for higher pensions and a variety of other issues.

Their experiences have illuminated the class character of Parliament. While the big business pressure groups are given every facility and in fact are very often sought out by the specialised committees of the two main parties, the workers taking part in mass lobbies are confronted with obstacles. Often they are pushed around by the police and officials of the House; usually they are admitted in small batches, and sometimes their M.P. will refuse to leave the bar or tea-room to come out and see them. Requests for facilities

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to enable a number of people to have a meeting with M.P.s are often refused, as was the case with a recent large deputation of pensioners, who had to threaten to sit down in the corridors before a sufficiently large council chamber was opened for them. But despite all the obstacles these mass lobbies have succeeded in forcing Parliament to face up to a number of important questions. Their impact would undoubtedly have been greater still had the Parliamentary Labour Party been making an all-out fight against the Tories, and if the T.U.C. policy were based on challenging the Government.

Finer adopts a sneering attitude towards the mass lobbies and compares them unfavourably with what he regards as the real thing—the smooth functioning big business lobbies in contact with a substantial number of M.P.s. He says:

> "It may even be stated as a rule: that the stronger an organisation's relations with M.P.s, the less public notice it arouses; and conversely, that fuss, noise, mass lobbying and similar demonstrations are often an indication of the failure of an organisation to achieve effective Parliamentary relations" (p.54).

In other words, the backstairs method of work concealed from the public eye is to be admired, while the method enabling thousands to take part, and therefore a genuine expression of public feeling, is to be scorned.

The working class movement would also benefit from more publicity and propaganda explaining the aims of the movement and answering the continuous stream of big business propaganda against its aims and ideals. The pressure groups clearly consider their public propaganda campaigns as invaluable background for their activities at a Parliamentary and departmental level. The trade unions and other sections of the Labour movement may not be in a position to spend the enormous sums laid out by the employers, but they have the invaluable and irreplaceable asset of thousands of convinced members who will readily place their time and energies at the movement's disposal, particularly if they see an effective reply made to the propaganda of the class enemy.

Finally, the activities of the pressure groups help to demonstrate that in order to achieve its historic mission of building a socialist society, the working class, upon winning political power, must destroy the economic power of monopoly capitalism, its control over the state apparatus and its domination of the means of propaganda. The manner by which this will be accomplished is detailed in the Communist Party's programme *The British Road to Socialism* which has the conception of the election of a genuine People's Parliament, responding to the needs and demands of the British people, in place of a Parliament dominated by the hired spokesmen of big business.

Lessons from Piccadilly

Irwin Ross

THE Rede Lecture by C. P. Snow, the *Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution,* has already been commented upon by Max Morris, and the ramifications of this discussion for creative workers, architects, artists, town-planners and engineers, etc., are of both great importance and topicality. For at every stage, the fundamental dichotomy in our cultural development that Snow describes inhibits the creative worker.

For the architect, particularly, this has meant the tendency towards divorcing theory from practice, and the separation of art from life, leading inevitably to the wider implications of his art, its social basis, being lost sight of, or at best greatly underestimated. For 200 years the artificial distinction between architect and engineer has inhibited creative activity and limited architectural development (until the growth of the "modern movement") to sterile academicism and stylistic revival.

With the downfall of the cultured patrons of the arts and the break up of the large scale estate-developments which produced London's famous Bloomsbury Squares and the Nash Terraces at Regent's Park, etc., a dark age of unparalleled land speculation descended, with land-use "planning" limited to the prevention of the worst excesses of individual rapacious developers in the interests of rapacious developers as a whole. This is the physical or three dimensional legacy of imperial expansion at the heart of Empire. The post-war City of London is not very different. Its more utilitarian character is simply more in keeping with the decline of Empire and the rather more modest role of Britain as policeman.

The legacy of the past, indeed of the present,

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weighs heavily. The reshaping of man's total environment is nowhere more pressing than in densely urbanised Britain, the first industrial country, erstwhile workshop of the world. The problem is complex, for the reconstruction of an existing city is different to the erection of a new town. Here we are dealing with existing physical and social patterns. But if the problem is complex, what is being done to solve it? The answer is: virtually nothing.

Coventry's Chief Architect, Arthur Ling, in a lecture to the British Architects' Conference June 1960 stated:

> "There is no drastic reshaping to meet the social and technical problems of the next hundred years, we seem to be unable in fact to catch up with the present and there is certainly no allowance for the future. We talk about the separate elements of towns, slum clearance, roads, industry, housing and the way responsibility for these constituent elements is divided in national and local government encourages this".

The impact and challenge of the technical and industrial revolution, the enormity of the urban crisis sharply contrasted by the immense possibilities which exist to change the world for the better, the knowledge of what has and is being done to change nature and the face of cities in the U.S.S.R., China, and the Peoples Democracies, are a few of the reasons why more architects and town-planners are forced by life itself to come to grips with the wider implications of their art. *Its specific expression is to be found in the renewed interest in urban environment and social basis of architecture, in the need for team work and closer co-operation between technicians with varied experience.*

That the leader of the team should be the architect-planner is also comprehensible in an age when the correct approach to the solution of mass housing problems, schools, hospitals and health-centres, must be in the direction of permutations of standard building elements, produced on the factory assembly line. It is worth noting that this is the direction of planned development in the U.S.S.R. with clearly defined socialist objectives—the production of planned beautiful cities (see Nora Beloff's Report in the *Observer* 12th June 1960), the continued improvement in the well-being of the population.

In most capitalist countries, the most outstanding application of this line of development lies in the motor-car industry, and only to a lesser extent within the building industry (notoriously backward by almost any standards in this country).

It has been estimated that only £50 million to £60 million went on urban renewal in 1957, and with around 4m. houses over 70 years old, only £600 million were spent on housing. Compare this with the £1,616 million spent on armaments, euphemistically termed "Defence", and £300 million on advertising. The extent of speculation in office building is evidenced by the fact that 0.1 per cent of the money spent on offices was spent on roads within cities. These figures throw real light upon the desperate plight of the cities and the Government's complete disregard for solutions which might interfere with the great take-over bids for land and property that legislation from 1951 onwards has made easier than ever before.

There is no longer a Ministry of Town and Country Planning, and the various ministry research teams that produced exciting blueprints for a new Britain have long since been disbanded. Town planning legislation has been emasculated beyond recognition by Acts and Regulations passed since 1951.

Mounting Chaos and Widespread Concern

Widespread public concern at the mounting chaos in our towns has been expressed in many quarters. The Royal Institute of British Architects, the Town Planning Institute, the Society for the Promotion of Urban Renewal and the Royal Fine Art Commission have all called for comprehensive development. The failure to call for measures to curb speculation and to put forward measures designed to solve the financial problems of local authorities are an indication of the limitations in the standpoints of these bodies. Nevertheless, all these organisations are on record for renewal in the public interest.

It is now necessary to expose the inability and unwillingness of a Tory Government to solve the problems of cities, for the problems are the expression of the deep-seated conflict which exists between the needs of the vast majority of ordinary people on the one hand and the demands of the insurance companies, development companies etc. on the other.

The failure to build new towns and cities and renew the old does not stem from any basic lack of knowledge and technique, it derives from the relative inefficiency of a capitalist or unplanned economy as compared with a planned socialist system. Part of the price of an economy geared to war preparations is the stagnation of city development and the neglect of many essential social needs, perhaps typified in the fact that London still has no National Theatre; great office blocks oust the town dweller from former residential areas like Soho and Paddington; no more New

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Towns are being built and the progressive disintegration of the transport system, the neglect of public transport in favour of free-for-all penetration of the city centres by the motor-car, threatens the very existence of the old.

We must explain to the passionate advocates of urban renewal that they cannot have rockets too. The quicker the jet planes and rockets, the slower the traffic moves through our cities. Problems of city growth, town and country planning, are first and foremost ideological problems which stem from the property relations of the capitalist form of society.

Public Enquiry

The outstanding issue of recent months which has focused public attention on some of these problems has been the public enquiry into the development of the Monico Site (as it has become known) in Piccadilly Circus, London.

With the rejection of the design by the Minister of Housing and Local Government, a decision based on the report of his inspector, C. D. Buchanan, the way is clear for a complete examination of the implications and issues which were involved.

Despite the accurate description by Professor J. G. Grace of Tulane University, U.S.A. — "The most bare-faced piece of design-by-default within decades" — the issues were not primarily concerned with the aesthetic merits or otherwise of a single building taken in isolation. Whilst public indignation was aroused in the first place by the newspaper reproductions of a perspective sketch put out at a press conference by Mr. Cotton on behalf of the developing company in October, 1959 (you may remember the drawing showing the building with a crane on top, and a large advertisement "Snap Plom for Vigour" on the main front panel), and the knowledge that planning permission had been given by the London County Council, *the inquiry showed that some of the wider political, social and economic factors, preventing comprehensive rebuilding of areas of cities as part of a phased plan, in the interests of the pedestrian and general public, were grasped in many quarters.*

Furneaux Jordan, past Head of the Architectural Association School of Architecture and architectural critic of the *Observer,* wrote in that paper recently, *"Property is too serious to be left to financiers. Some of us have known that for a long time now, the Government and the London County Council know it too".*

Unfortunately, there is little to suggest that the Tory Government believe this, since it represents most ably the interests of those self-same financiers. Likewise, the fighting qualities of the Labour L.C.C. have been sadly lacking in recent years, so much so that their one-time unquestioned majority is being seriously threatened. Such is the price of retreat from militant struggle on behalf of the ordinary men and women of London.

Dominating the situation at every stage is the Government, manipulating the purse strings and undermining the authority of the L.C.C. and, indeed, local government in general.

Why then was the decision given against the developers? Above all, because public opinion, both within the relevant professional groupings and outside, was mobilised, and a determined campaign waged against this "greedy, tastless, lumpy, squat tower on an amorphous podium", as one architect described the scheme. Questions were asked within Parliament and letters even appeared in *The Times.*

Objections by about sixty prominent architects were registered on two principal counts:

1. The proposed building fell far short of achieving the architectural quality for such an important site.

2. The proposed building precluded satisfactory comprehensive development in the future.

It was also suggested that the Minister should set up an advisory group to report within a few weeks on the function of the Circus and how best it could be developed.

Widespread support was forthcoming for this approach, and many outstanding personalities in the architectural and planning worlds voiced their criticisms. Cadbury-Brown, practising architect and president of the Architectural Association, received the unanimous backing of the Association's Council representing some 3,000 architects. At the inquiry Noel Moffett, a senior lecturer in architecture and town-planning, stated that he represented 302 architect-teachers at some 18 schools of architecture. The British Architectural Students Association, as well as Anti-Ugly Action, also voiced their disapproval in no uncertain manner.

L.C.C.'s Role

Needless to say, the developers considered that they were the objects of a conspiracy. The fact is that both they and the L.C.C. had underestimated the tremendous support that can be mobilised for measures which mean positive planning and rebuilding of our cities so that they are beautiful and safe to walk about in.

The public outcry was generated in part by the ambiguous role played by the London County Council. It transpired that the chief architect to the L.C.C. had, in fact, helped in the design of a building which was not simply bad architecture, but which negated the Chief Architect's early ten-

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tative or Advisory Scheme for the Circus. Without going into a long technical description, this Advisory Scheme presented a worthwhile phased plan of redevelopment, and recognised the civic character of the Circus. It had been quietly shelved. *As evidence proceeded it became apparent that the L.C.C. had proved amenable to the pressures vested interests had exerted upon it.*

J. M. Richards, Editor of the *Architectural Review,* giving evidence, pointed out that a unified scheme for the Circus was essential and it should provide for the separation of pedestrians from vehicles (in the interests of safety and amenity, not to mention efficiency). He pointed out that the Council had themselves painted an exciting picture of the possibilities of this kind of planning . . . but they seemed ready to sabotage their own ideas by their readiness to give consent for the present design.

The L.C.C. Chief Architect, Hubert Bennett, in the course of his evidence revealed the weakness of the position of the L.C.C. from both the legislative and financial points of view. Unfortunately, instead of a forthright exposition of the difficulties facing the L.C.C. in attempting redevelopment in the public interest, the reverse was the case. Bennett argued that the Advisory plan was unacceptable to developers — they feared that the arrangements made for the safety of pedestrians would have a crippling effect on the buildings, and excessive disruption of ground floor uses by the insertion of escalators. (In non-technical terms, it means that valuable frontage and profit margins of the developers would be affected and this, of course, would never do!) Bennett stated that it was not considered possible to proceed with the pedestrian arrangements in view of the opposition, and the matter had been thought out again.

Thought out again! A more satisfactory explanation would be that the L.C.C. had never formally approved their own Advisory plan and that, in the event, the far-sighted proposals of their technical officers proved an embarrassment to their policy of collaboration with the present Government, passive acceptance of its financial cuts and its erosive activities with regard to the L.C.C. and other authorities' activities.

What emerged from the evidence and needs emphasising is not only the timidity of outlook with regard to large scale comprehensive redevelopment, although this is serious, but that the L.C.C. finds it impossible to consider comprehensive development treatment under present legislation for the Circus (and for that matter any central area where land values are phenomenal and compensation prohibitive particularly at present high rates of interest) within their present budget, except at the expense of other more urgent schemes. The most that Bennett said was that the position would be reconsidered if the Minister made more funds available, but even then it would be questioned whether Piccadilly Circus should take priority over other matters such as schools and housing. *This is the crux of the matter; central government financial policy is bringing local government into disrepute. High interest rates have forced hundreds of authorities to stop building. Speculation in land values has forced local authorities to compete in the inflated land market. No wonder then that the rate of renewal cannot keep pace and that the L.C.C. must consider slum clearance its most important task. However, agreement on priorities must not blind us to the fact that there are socialist alternatives to present policy and Socialists everywhere must take the lead in pointing them out.*

Big Money

The developers, Messrs. Cotton, Ballard and Blow and Messrs. City Centre Properties Limited, argued that the site was before anything else a commercial site, and any project here must allow for viable commercial profits — which I suppose means "big money". They were able to fall back on the Council for support, for had not the L.C.C. shown that the building would accord with their proposals for the future development of the Circus?

Elwyn Jones, Q.C., Counsel for the Civic Trust, which provided a "platform" for objectors, providing Counsel and organisation, questioned Mr. Bennett about the commercial basis of the design, and the profit to be anticipated by the developers. Mr. Jones put this at £2,419,000 with rentals of £230,000 a year from shops, restaurants and offices and £360,000 from advertisements, on a capital outlay of £1,500,000 for the building and £3 million for the site.

ELWYN JONES: The essence of the whole design of this building is the developers' profit, clearly, is it not?

BENNETT: That is no concern of the planning authority.

ELWYN JONES: I am suggesting to you that the trouble here is that this developer is trying to get too much out of this site and out of this building: do you agree?

BENNETT: I think this applies to most developments.

How difficult is the life of the "impartial administrator"! Nevertheless, the inspector reported: "It seemed to me that the Civic Trust were entitled to suggest that a less intensive use of the site was desirable on architectural and planning grounds. . . ."

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Isolated Triumph

Piccadilly has been reprieved for the moment, and the experts are thinking again about the technical problems involved. Public outcry has once again won important concessions and the value of this must not be underestimated or not valued. It proves that by day-to-day struggle advances even in the field of planning can be won.

But what has this decision changed fundamentally? Again the answer is: virtually nothing, except a breathing space to fight the next battle and this is important, for the same sort of piecemeal approach to development menaces the future of Trafalgar Square.

Without fundamental changes of policy, without socialist town-planning implemented by a real socialist government, the new city patterns befitting the second industrial scientific revolution will remain a blue-print along with so much other valuable theoretical work on planning that has been done in this country.

Seen in this light, one must agree with W. John Morgan, one of the few writers to point out that: *"The defeat of Monico is an isolated triumph and Mr. Brooke's decision is contrary to the general attempts now being made to break up the powers of planners. It is also contrary to the movement designed to restore to areas of local pressure important decisions about the use of land and questions of architectural quality"* (*New Statesman*, May 26th).

The Monico Inquiry revealed clearly the absence of any powers of compulsion on behalf of the local authority. The L.C.C. had a scheme, but were unable for financial and legal reasons to implement it. Likewise legislation bears no relation to the needs of today. Local authority finance is inadequate in dealing with public improvements in central areas, and where major road improvements are being made, grants should be available to implement the redevelopment in depth of areas affected by major road works.

Sir William Holford's[1] evidence at the inquiry illustrates current awareness of the crisis. Equally it illustrates the limitations of solutions only appropriate for our existing society.

> "There seemed to be a gap in the powers available for securing the redevelopment of the most interesting social centres in London, and for rising to the occasion when such a place as Piccadilly was involved. Unless the public authority owned the whole area then, in the process of negotiations between the private and the public interests, the imaginary non-revenue elements such as strolling space, promenade decks, traffic bridges, pedestrian vantage points and other things for public enjoyment, all tended to be left out. Yet it was difficult to see that the L.C.C. could take in all the key points in London by public ownership. It was the system that was at fault. Other ideas might well be explored for undertaking important redevelopment of this kind, semi-public trusts or consortiums, for instance, where the inventiveness of the private promoter could be used. This sort of thing had been done in the past, and it should be possible to use our genius to think out something of the same kind again. Admittedly new legislation would be needed". (Quoted from the summary of evidence presented by C. D. Buchanan to the Minister.)

The suggestions which might have some limited application within our society, i.e. might help to solve some of the *technical* problems of cities, are all concerned with making the present set-up work. They might be classified as the architectural equivalent of the "New Thinking" that has gone on within the Labour Party with such disastrous results for the Labour movement. *Political changes are the prerequisite for real advance in solving these problems, not technical ingenuity.*

Land Ownership

Comprehensive land ownership by the local authority—utilised to solve problems on the scale of the region—can provide the only consistent basis for any policy of city rebuilding. Comprehensive land ownership is the prerequisite of fine city building. Great architecture is to be found in the relationships of buildings to each other and the environment which is thereby created, rather than in any isolated building's stylistic qualities.

An extension of public ownership of land in cities is urgently needed. Without this the complex problems of the existing cities, aggravated by the growing traffic chaos, cannot be solved. Comprehensive planning and traffic solutions demand comprehensive land ownership.

Interest Rates, Land Values and Green Belt Policy

High interest rates and increased land values make land acquisition by local authorities progressively more impossible, even where a Tory Minister might be prepared to confirm a compulsory purchase order or declare an area as subject to comprehensive development procedure.

The effect of the 1959 Town and Country Planning Act has been to inflate land values, especially at the centres of the great urban conglomerations, still more whilst the return to the free market as the criterion of assessment of compensation—i.e. potential as opposed to actual value—means that

[1] Professor of Town Planning, London University and President Elect of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

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prices can be raised and raised again by the gamblers in the land-grab business.

Reference to the decisions of the Land Tribunal and journals devoted to land transactions make interesting reading. Only a few weeks ago a 64 acre site in Camberley, which was sold for £25,000 in March, 1958, was sold for £210,000 in 1960. Little wonder hundreds of local authorities have stopped building, whilst the private speculator, landowner and builder rub their hands with glee, not only at the prospect of more private building but at the additional prospect of bringing about a rezoning of land, erstwhile part of the Green Belt, for speculative housing. The recent Government Publication *New Houses in the Country* shows the threat to the countryside and the further relaxation in restrictions on the private builder which is now to be allowed.

The great concern which these developments have caused is reflected in the opening paragraph of an editorial in the weekly *Architects Journal*, which states:

> "Builders and land speculators have been putting pressure on the Ministry of Local Government to allow more building in green belts and the open countryside. As might be expected from a Government which is constantly tempted to put private profit before public good, the builders' pressure is gaining effect. Last week the Ministry's deputy chief technical planner, J. R. James, was encouraging local authorities to relax their green belt policy" (June 9th, 1960).

No wonder Surrey's proposals to make most of the County Green Belt has 80 objectors.

Slum Clearance Too Limited

Slum clearance schemes are insufficient and too limited in their objective, contributing little to the overall improvement of the city pattern. The financial obstacles which stand in the way of local authorities, particularly the authorities with Labour majorities, those usually with the worst areas of working class housing, often overcrowded and even if not technically slums, then certainly lacking one or more of the essential amenities (bath, hot and cold water, indoor W.C. etc.), must be removed.

Low interest or even interest-free loans to local authorities for land purchase on a comprehensive scale is an essential prerequisite towards any solution of the acute problems besetting the inner areas of any large city in the country.

It is the high interest on loan charges which has to be paid, often even before a site is completely cleared or a single house built, that is such a crippling feature of local government finance. *No solution to the housing problem is in sight without winning reduced rates of interest on the one hand, and a large scale return to building houses to let and rents the working class can afford.*

The local authority must become a large-scale landowner on a *comprehensive* basis to secure planned redevelopment in the public interest. It must be made possible for local authorities of towns with large decayed areas to declare areas ripe for public ownership and comprehensive redevelopment.

In other words, the financial provisions of the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act should be replaced with something immediately applicable and comprehensible to the problems of our central urban areas—full of speculative offices and small night population on the one hand, and to the inner slum areas with overcrowded dwellings and populations on the other.

Then the local authority would have the powers of compulsion, the teeth it had not got at Piccadilly, and would have not merely the power but the possibility of buying land with a view to promoting comprehensive development.

Building For and By the People

Nationalisation of the building industry, which literally needs a complete re-tooling, is an essential element in any attempt at formulating a policy for a planned Socialist Britain. Likewise nationalisation of the insurance companies. Agents of these companies are searching out the most delectable sites. One insurance company has 30 per cent of its funds in property. Insurance companies as a whole have a combined total of nearly £500 million invested in property.

Evidence of monopoly was recently published in *The Chartered Surveyor*, April 1960. It was revealed that half of the total of property investments is held in four companies.

* * *

It is very likely that, given certain financial help or profit incentive in one form or another, a certain amount of comprehensive development will be encouraged by those who determine whether buildings should be supported financially or not.

For example, John Laing's have put forward a scheme of limited comprehensive redevelopment of the Bull Ring Area of Birmingham. This is one of a very few large-scale attempts at private estate investment. This development is a logical outcome of the competition between the giants.

As socialists, we can no longer take any interest in these sops that afford no long-term overall solution and which merely serve to bolster up a system over-ripe for change. Nevertheless, it is illustrative of Fabian illusions about so-called "affluent society", that many progressive planners

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and architects are ready to argue that if public ownership is not acceptable to the ruling class, then how about consortiums, private development trusts, etc., etc.?

The potential, if not actual, patrons must be the working-class. The programme which the Movement must draw up—Blueprint for a Planned Socialist Britain—must put forward a real solution to the planning problems of our industrial and urban society. There is room for tremendous theoretical discussion around these problems, providing we fight for the houses needed at rents the workers can afford at one and the same time.

New Towns for Old

Either we are for some New Towns or we are not. In theory and on paper all housing problems can, for the most part, be solved quickly within the existing, built-up conurbations. In practice, the process is technically exceedingly complex. Even with a socialist government it would provide difficult problems and would take some time to solve. Meanwhile, men, women and children need homes and gardens, etc., parks need to be opened up in the congested hearts of the cities so that we can enjoy the greater leisure for which we are struggling.

Without neglecting *the first priority* i.e. the large scale rebuilding of our cities, the Communist Party and the Labour movement, all socialists must come out in favour of a number of large scale projects, more new as well as expanded towns, for meeting the tremendous pressure generated by the housing problems in London, Birmingham and Glasgow. The L.C.C. decision to abandon a new town at Hook is yet another example of the Tory attitude exemplified in the decision to refuse Birmingham's request to build two satellite towns to help solve their housing and overspill needs. Likewise, Manchester has repeatedly asked, and has been repeatedly refused, a new town by successive Labour and Tory governments. There are 70,000 condemned houses in the inner areas of that city alone.

Lastly, and I do not propose to discuss the question—a question for economists—I raise the fundamental issue—distribution of employment and industry. It is now quite apparent that the capacity to offer employment is growing in the south and home counties at a much faster rate than elsewhere. Rational Town and County planning—physical planning—must, to achieve any scientific validity, be based on an overall economic plan and distribution of economic and industrial centres. There is, of course, no evidence of this. It suggests what must already be obvious, that Britain will become really beautiful and rational only when it becomes a planned Britain, basing its economic life on the principles of Marxism.

A note on current profits and exploitation

Emile Burns

WHAT is the current rate of exploitation in British industry today?—that is, what is the relation between the surplus taken by the capitalists and the wages paid to the workers in production?

In his chapter on "The Rate of Surplus Value" in *Capital*, Vol. I, Marx takes as the basis for most of his examples a rate of exploitation—the ratio of profits to wages—of 100 per cent; that is to say, for every £1 paid out in wages, £1 is taken in profit. He also quotes one actual case, the figures for which he says "were given me by a Manchester spinner", where the rate of exploitation was 153 per cent. The 100 per cent he used was purely an assumption made in order to illustrate how the theory worked; but it is clear that he used 100 per cent rather than say 1,000 per cent because he considered it a normal rate of exploitation in that period.

The official statistics on wages and profit that are available for recent years are not, unfortunately, drawn up in order to illustrate the theory of value and surplus value; in fact they are a confusion—whether deliberate or otherwise is not the point—of groupings of quite different kinds into a single category (for example, directors' fees are lumped with wages and salaries), or items of the same kind are put in different categories. Any attempt to use these statistics to determine the present-day rate of exploitation can therefore give only very approximate and incomplete results. Nevertheless, even approximate results can truth-

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fully present the general nature of the exploitation on which the capitalist system rests today as it did in Marx's time; and incidentally, these results are the most convincing proof that the nature of capitalism has in no way changed.[1]

There are three main sources for an examination of the relation of wages to profits:

(1) Annual Reports of National Income and Expenditure.

(2) Census of Production Reports.

(3) Reports of particular companies.

In examining each of these it is necessary to call attention to their limitations for the purpose in view, and at the same time to draw such conclusions as are possible in so far as the statistics have a bearing on the rate of exploitation.

National Income and Expenditure

The 1959 Bluebook on National Income and Expenditure gives the total wages paid in 1958 as £7,770 million.

The items of profit given (companies, public corporations, farmers, etc.) and rent total £6,368 million.

On the surface, before any further examination, this means that the capitalist class got 82 per cent of the amount paid out in wages: the rate of exploitation was 82 per cent, averaged over the whole of industry.

That this is a gross understatement is clear from the fact that the wage figure given is the *total*; it includes the wages of private chauffeurs and domestic servants, of Central and Local Government employees and employees of the Health Service, as well as of an unknown number of clerical workers who are in no way linked with production. Unfortunately there is no way of sorting out the wages paid to workers engaged in production—that is, producing value and surplus value—from wages paid to others. All we can say on the basis of the published figures is that the rate of exploitation over the whole of industry must be much higher than 82 per cent, but we cannot tell how much.

Now let us turn to the profits figure. This is presumably compiled on the basis of company returns, etc., giving the profit after expenses. But it is quite certain that these expenses, which have been deducted from gross income, include directors' fees and high managerial salaries and costly "expense accounts", as well as the wages and salaries of workers engaged on publicity, keeping the register of shareholders, and other jobs which have no direct connection with production. From the standpoint of each company, of course, it is quite right to treat these as expenses before profit is arrived at. But from the standpoint of examining the degree of exploitation of the workers engaged in production, all of these expenses should be *added* to the published profit, since they are really paid out of the surplus value created in production.

Here again, there are no figures from which we could even estimate what these so to speak non-productive expenses would amount to, but over the whole of industry they must total a very considerable amount. If these amounts were added to the official profits figure, the relation between profits and wages, the rate of exploitation, would be still higher. Instead of the rate being 82 per cent, after reducing the wages as above, and now increasing the profit, it is probable that the rate of exploitation would be at least 100 per cent.

This estimate, however, does not take into account salaried workers who are linked with production, and we can get closer to the right figure from other material in the Bluebook. If we take Table 16 (Gross domestic product by industry and type of income) we are able to separate industries in which surplus value is produced from those which *share in,* but do not themselves produce, surplus value: distributive trades, and insurance, banking and finance, besides rent.

The industries producing surplus value (agriculture, mining, manufacturing, construction, public utilities and transport) show total wages paid £5,665 million, plus salaries £1,893 million. The salaries item will include both draughtsmen and other employees actually linked with production (therefore producing surplus value), and directors and managerial and other highly paid employees, besides other employees engaged in publicity and other non-productive work, who are paid *out of surplus value*. No details are given, but we cannot be far wrong if we take it that half this salary item belongs to production, while the other half really belongs to surplus value. Adding half the salaries item to the wages item, the total of productive wages and salaries is £6,612 million.

On the other side, surplus value, we have:

	million £
Total profits in productive industries	3,795
Half of salaries item for non-productive employees	947
Distributive trades profits	984
Insurance, banking and finance profits	453
Rent	1,038
Total surplus value ...	7,217

[1] In the *Labour Party Handbook* of 1951 it was asserted, as part of an argument why we should all be interested in a production drive, that "We are producing now for ourselves, not for a moneyed minority." The facts do not bear this out.

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This total of £7,217 million surplus value is created by wage and salary earners paid a total of £6,613 million—which works out at a rate of exploitation of the actual producers of surplus value of 109 per cent.

Census of Production

The 1958 Census of Production—provisional results of which were published in the *Board of Trade Journal,* January 15th, 1960—shows the estimated net output of all manufacturing industries in the United Kingdom as £7,772 million.

The figure given for the wages and salaries of "Operatives" in these industries is £3,166 million.

The "net output", it is explained, represents the proceeds of sales by all manufacturing enterprises, less the cost of materials and fuel purchased; in other words, it is as near as can be the equivalent of the new value created by the workers. In fact, the *Journal* says: "The net output of an industry represents the value added to materials by the process of production".

Deducting the payment to "operatives" from the total value they added in production, the figure of surplus value is £4,606 million. The rate of exploitation shown by these figures is 145 per cent; but as a separate figure is given for salaries of "other employees", and these will include draughtsmen and other technical workers who are really associated with production, their salaries should be added to the "operatives" wages figure, and this would have the effect of reducing the actual rate of exploitation, though certainly leaving it well above the 100 per cent.

These figures relate to *all* manufacturing industries, and are therefore an average of results from relatively old and backward and also more advanced, modern factories. If we take the statistics from the group of engineering and electrical goods manufacture only, we are dealing with a proportion of these modern factories, and the results show a higher rate of exploitation than the average for all manufacturing industries. For this group it is also of interest to show the increasing rate of exploitation as recorded in the Censuses of 1951 and 1954 as well as 1958:

Engineering and Electrical Goods

	1951	1954	1958
		(million £)	
Net output	1,002	1,287	1,698
Operatives' pay	435	527	672
Surplus	567	760	1,026
Rate of exploitation: per cent	130	144	153

In the year 1958 there was a certain amount of unused capacity in some branches of this industry; this gradually came into use in the course of 1959, and the financial journals noted with glee that the increase in production which was taking place did not mean a similar increase in labour employed, and that therefore the level of profits was expected to be higher; as indeed the rising profits recorded in the financial press have since proved. This means not only that the rate of exploitation will have increased in 1959, but that it will have increased very substantially.

It is perfectly true that these calculations cannot pretend to give the accurate figure of exploitation, for the reason that the figures are not available in the form required for this purpose, and some of the factors which should be taken into account—salaries to persons actually linked with production although not included among "operatives", and also the wear and tear of machinery—have not been allowed for, because they are not known. Nevertheless, all these sources show a very similar result, which cannot in general be disputed: that the rate of exploitation of the workers in British industry today is somewhere about 100 per cent, or more in the more modern sections of industry. And in order to reinforce this general conclusion one more piece of evidence can be produced—the profits of particular companies in relation to the number of workers employed and the average wages paid in their industries.

Company Reports

The 1959 report of Imperial Chemical Industries (published in April 1960) gives sufficient detail to illustrate the extent of exploitation of that company's workers.

Profits, after charging heavy depreciation, are shown as £79,755,000; the number of employees as 109,596.

Dividing the profits figure by the number of employees, we get £728 as the profit contributed by each employee; that is, £14 per week.

The average wages earned by workers in the chemical and allied trades in April 1959 is shown in the *Ministry of Labour Gazette* (August 1959) as £11 13s. 1d. Taking the published profit as equivalent to surplus value, this means that in this particular case the rate of exploitation (ratio of surplus value to wages) was 120 per cent.

As with the statistics quoted earlier, the figures given in the report do not make it possible to get an accurate result; but if all the details were available it is quite certain that they would show a *higher* rate of exploitation than that given above.

For example, the number of employees stated will include salaried directors and higher managerial staff, as well as a considerable number of employees looking after the share register (I.C.I.

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had 341,757 shareholders at the end of 1959), employees doing publicity and many other jobs not linked with production. If we knew these numbers, they should be deducted from the number of employees for the purpose of estimating surplus value, which is created only in production.[2] Reducing the number of employees in this way, we should get a greater profit per head, and consequently a higher rate of exploitation.

Moreover, not only should the number of employees given be reduced, but there should be a corresponding increase in the amount of profit. For the directors' fees and wages and salaries of all these non-productive workers (as well as the "Expenses" racket and other non-productive expenses) have been charged as expenses before the profit figure has been arrived at. The true profit, or surplus value created by the workers in production, is therefore much greater than the figure published; and therefore on this account again, the profit per head would be higher.

Many other qualifications could be made—for example, that the depreciation charged before the profit is given is £33 million, which is pretty high and may well conceal a certain "secret reserve" taken from the profit, by "writing off" more than is actually necessary to replace assets worn out in the productive process that year.

But whatever qualifications are made, they all tend to show that the profit made per productive worker, or the rate of exploitation, was higher, not lower, than the 120 per cent with which we started.

The report of the Ford Motor Company for 1959 shows a profit of £43.1 million, and the item of "Wages, Salaries and Employee Benefits" is £48.3 million. Using these figures for lack of any more detailed account, the rate of exploitation would be 89 per cent; but the points made above in the case of the I.C.I. would also apply here: that the wages and salaries will include other than productive workers, and these and "Expense accounts" etc. charged against the profit should be *added* to the profit to show the real rate of exploitation, which would therefore be much higher than that stated.

An interesting point about the Ford accounts is that they show the rate of exploitation rising year by year. On the same basis as above, this rate was 71 per cent in 1957, 80 per cent in 1958, and 89 per cent in 1959. As explained above, these are very much understatements of the real rate, but the rising trend is clearly shown.[3]

The 1959 accounts of Vauxhall Motors (L.R.D. *Fact Service,* April 23rd, 1960) give additional details which enable a more accurate estimate to be made. The "net output" figure is £47.3 million, but it is shown that this is after deducting £3.6 million for "Selling, general and administrative expenses". This non-productive expenditure should be added to the net output, making £50.9 million total. Wages and salaries were £22.6 million, leaving £28.3 million of the net output as surplus. This makes a rate of exploitation of 125 per cent.

The following case is not based on a company's actual results, but on material published in the *Financial Times* of May 11th, 1959. This material is a description of a new mill, "technologically the most advanced in the world", which has been put into operation by British Insulated Cables at Prescot, Lancashire. It is a fully automatic copper rod rolling mill, with a daily capacity of 400 tons, which will have "a normal production of 100,000 tons a year on the basis of two daily shifts of 8½ hours each"; it "is operated by a crew of only seventeen men". Relating the figures given to the present market price of the raw material and the finished product, and the estimated cost of fuel etc. based on Census of Production figures, the value of the net output would appear to be several million pounds. The wages of the thirty-four men involved in two shifts, and of any reserve and auxiliary labour employed, would have to be well in the sur-tax class (over £2,000 a year each) if the rate of exploitation is to be less than 1,000 per cent.

It is sometimes thought that the lower the wages, the greater the exploitation of the worker. But high or low wages are only one factor; the other is the value of the worker's output.[4] It is the relation between wages and output that matters. The case just quoted is an illustration of this—admittedly an extreme case of an absolutely modern, fully automated plant. But it could also

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[2] This does not mean that only manual workers are productive of value and surplus value. We must also include "the workers who function as overseers of those workers directly engaged in working up the raw material", "the works engineer, and so on." (Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value,* Lawrence and Wishart edition 1951, p. 195). Marx explains (p. 196): "It is indeed characteristic of the capitalist mode of production that it separates the various labours, and even labours by brain and labours by hand—or labours in which one or the other predominates—and divides them out among various persons. This however does not prevent the material product from being the common product of these persons. . . . All these persons directly reproduce, in addition to their wage, a surplus value for the capitalists."

[3] It is also interesting to note that between 1954 and 1959 Ford's profits per worker rose by £350 certainly the wages of the workers showed no such increase.

[4] That is to say, his net output, or value he adds to the raw materials etc. in the process of production.

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be illustrated in a more everyday form from the Census of Production, where relatively high-wage industries show higher rates of exploitation than low-wage industries, because they are better mechanised.

Conclusion

Even if there are many qualifications to be made about particular figures, the evidence from the available statistical material is fairly conclusive: that the general rate of exploitation of the productive workers in British industry is in the region of 100 per cent—£1 of surplus value to £1 of wages. It is also clear that in the more modern sections of industry it is considerably higher, and that it is rising with the further modernisation that is being carried out by the big concerns. (It goes without saying that the rate of exploitation of colonial workers, say in the modern copper mines, must be very much higher.)

It is this exploitation which is an *essential* feature of capitalist production, which will last as long as capitalism lasts. Only socialism, by ending the private ownership of the means of production, will end exploitation and make the total product of industry available for the whole of society. This is the basis of the tremendous economic advances made in the socialist countries and their now rapidly rising standard of living.

It is sometimes said that this transfer of the means of production to the ownership of society would make no difference to the workers, since even in socialist society the workers would have to be deprived of the surplus over their wages in order to provide funds to modernise and expand industry, which the capitalists now do out of the surplus in Britain.

It is true that Marx pointed out that the workers could never directly consume the full value of what they produce, because funds must be set aside for the expansion of production and reserves, as well as for the general expenses of administration, social services, etc. (*Critique of the Gotha Programme*).

But it is one thing to use a part of your product for social purposes, which serve you and your family as well as society in general; and it is quite another thing to hand over part of your product to a small class of capitalists, who—in so far as they use it for expanding industry and not for luxury living—are concerned only with expanding and modernising industry in order to exploit you more—to take more of your product from you in the following years.

In socialist society there is no idle class to support: the able-bodied person who eats has to work for his food. And the accumulation for the expansion and modernisation of industry serves the whole of society: therefore its direct consequences for the workers are a higher standard of living and shorter hours, as we are seeing in the Soviet Union today.

The ending of exploitation of the workers in production is not only an economic necessity: it is also the necessary basis for the whole social and intellectual advance of the people. That is why it is so essential for the Labour movement to have a clear understanding of the nature and extent of exploitation as it exists in capitalist Britain today.

Freedom

R. Bull

TODAY in Britain, we are faced with a tremendous struggle to put right one of the worst abuses of capitalism—the mass deception of millions of people. The capitalist class, which stands in the way of a great flourishing of social development, has so successfully sown confusion in the past about the question of freedom, that it has been able to restrict even the most elementary democratic rights in many parts of the world yet still convince people that it is they, the capitalists, who want to give people freedom, and the communists the ones who want to take it away.

But as we have seen in the remarkable political developments of the recent past, the "great lie" is beginning to split open. While matters are at an early stage for the moment, it is already clear that the capitalists are going to have to look for some new material soon—which will not be easy to find. Happily, Brian Simon's pamphlet is already proved true. In South Korea, Turkey and Japan, three great cracks have appeared in the

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facade of the "free world", letting in a lot of light on the rottenness within. These cracks are visible for all to see.

But still in Britain, the rottenness of our system is yet to be revealed. Brian Simon's pamphlet *Freedom* will be of great assistance in bringing home the realities of the situation here. It is a superb pamphlet. It states grimly the stark facts of class domination, a sorry picture which it has been difficult to get across to people during the comic-opera days of "you've never had it so good". But it also contains a tremendously powerful message of hope and confidence as well. Capitalism *cannot* last. In the very struggle to keep itself alive, the capitalist system creates the forces which will pull it down. You may never have had it so good now, but before long, you'll want it a whole lot better. And capitalism is already scraping the barrel. One day it will not be able to provide what is wanted.

The essay begins with an analysis of what goes on inside "freedom", showing clearly that freedom is not an abstract condition but is composed of the presence—or absence—of the opportunity to do certain things. These opportunities vary according to which social class you are from. In our society, the man who spends his life as a worker in the railway industry as a driver, fireman or signalman in no way has the same social opportunities as a company director. He doesn't enjoy the same freedom.

An analysis of the history of the development of the political rights we have in Britain today shows us that each class has had to fight to win the freedoms necessary for its existence. The capitalist class had to fight to obtain the free play of capital. The working class has gained, and maintains the position it holds in the present social scene, only by relentless, often bitter struggle.

> "History shows that freedom is a class question, that, in general, the degree of freedom enjoyed by any individual depends on the class of which he is a member and the success of this class as a whole in winning the freedoms necessary for its survival and development. This is a crucial point. The worker who, in the name of an abstract 'freedom', refuses to join a trade union, weakens the working class in its struggle against capitalist exploitation, and therefore helps the employer not only to keep wages down and hours of work up, but also to fasten the capitalist system of exploitation more firmly on the workers. Such a worker undermines the very conditions for the freedom of his class and therefore of himself. The working class as a whole can increase its freedom only by acting together in solidarity to maintain the freedoms already gained, and to extend them further" (p. 12).

The "Free World"

The capitalist view of freedom is shown up for what it is nowhere better than in its international implications. The "free world" is composed of the huge, tortured empires of France and Britain, a host of petty military tyrannies and fascist dictatorships, plus a handful of parliamentary democracies. What do Spain, Britain, South Korea, Formosa, Turkey, the U.S.A., and Thailand have in common? One thing and one thing only. Each of them guarantees the conditions for the free play of capital. The terrorism and brutality being used by the capitalist class in North, Central and South Africa in defence of their property are an indictment of the whole system and typical of the real mentality of the capitalist ruling class. In the U.S.A. and West Germany there are wide areas of social, economic and political ideas which no one dares discuss for fear of the consequences. These examples blow sky-high the myth of Western "freedom of thought".

Only in Britain and a few other Western European countries is there more or less complete democracy. This is extremely valuable, but in what light must it be viewed?

> "It is through utilising these freedoms that the working class have gained considerable improvements in conditions of work and in their standard of life. They have also made it possible for the working class to play an increasingly important part in political affairs. These freedoms enable the working class legally to organise their forces, and those of their allies, for the struggle for political power and the winning of socialism. They represent, therefore, a great advance on the position of one hundred years ago, when the workers were excluded from the franchise and had, therefore, no direct means of influencing legislation. In spite of all these gains, however, the freedoms won are far from complete" (p. 16).

These freedoms, then, are not an end in themselves—a final resting place—but simply the means to a much greater end.

Political and economic power still remain firmly in the hands of the capitalist class, and through its great wealth and control of the state machine, it controls all but a tiny proportion of the propaganda organs of modern society. By law, the capitalist class continually restricts the activities of left-wing organisations. In industry,

> "arising from its economic power, capital retains the power of victimisation, a right secured by English law—the right of an employer to sack an employee without giving reason, together with the practice of black-listing. This weapon is constantly used against militant workers on the shop floor. In the form of denial of promotion it also affects teachers, scientists, technologists, etc." (p. 17).

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Brian Simon's case thus far is watertight. But it is still possible for the capitalist class to stay the final blow of execution by throwing as much filth and calumny as possible against the one serious threat to its domination—the world working class revolt led by the Communist Party. In Britain, with its long record of jingoism, opportunism and corruption of working-class leaders, it has been possible for the capitalist class to recruit any number of "lefts" and "progressives" (even some "Marxists"!) to the anti-Communist bandwagon, all with the same cry on their lips: "Lack of freedom and democracy".

The Socialist World

Meeting each individual accusation with a counter-assertion is no answer, for the list of alleged incidents is endless. The capitalist press sees to that. The only reply is to make an analysis of the situation from a class point of view. What does this show us?

> "In the U.S.S.R., China and throughout the socialist world, tens of thousands and millions of people, previously living in conditions of appalling misery, poverty and illiteracy, have, through winning political and economic power, created their own conditions for education and culture, have won the right to make their own decisions as to the way their factories and farms are run, their towns and their country. They have won the right to criticise, to start things going, to act over the whole field of politics and industry and agriculture. Above all, through taking over the factories and the land, they have restored a full dignity to man by ending exploitation" (p. 23).

And after socialism has been built, society can then move on to the highest degree of freedom yet envisaged by man—that of communism, where each will contribute according to his ability and each take according to his needs.

> "The achievement of communism clearly requires an extremely high level of production—an abundance of goods. It requires also the final disappearance of the distinction between mental and manual labour, and so of all remnants of class distinction. Under communism, for the first time in human history, men will become truly free" (p. 23).

The capitalist class in the West is now faced with a class enemy of giant proportions, one which capitalism itself created and which grows in strength and ability every day:

> "Through winning the battle for trade union organisation and for the right to vote, workers have been able to carry on the struggle both in the industrial and in the political field for higher wages, better conditions of work—for their independence—in effect, for their freedom. As a result of hard-won victories the scope for free activity by workers, not only politically but in their personal lives, at home, on holidays, at the weekends, has been greatly improved" (p. 18).

But it is only the establishment of socialism that will put an end once and for all to the exploitation of man by man.

> "By introducing socialism, therefore, the working class brings class oppression to an end. This in itself means a great extension of human freedom. It is the prime condition of freedom itself" (p. 19).

What Will Happen?

The task facing socialists in Britain is to win the propaganda battle. The prospect of socialism is so much brighter than what capitalism can offer. And one of the main lines of attack must be this very question of freedom. This is the one great reason why we want to go forward to socialism, to end the limitations placed upon man's development by the capitalist system:

> "There are millions of people today living on the edge of poverty, for whom every week is a struggle to make ends meet. To be freed from the daily battle for the necessities of life, to move into an era of abundance, this is now no more than a dream for large sections of the population. But if this country were organised on a socialist basis, this could become a reality. The increase in production which socialism would bring about, together with the rise in wages which would become possible, would bring a genuine freedom for the mass of the people" (p. 20).

and to win for ourselves the boundless opportunities offered by the socialist system.

> "Under socialism, all forms of social and cultural activity which help men to gain their freedom, to throw off their feelings of inadequacy and purposelessness, which liberate the popular forces of self-expression, will be encouraged. Such a development of popular culture not only helps people to realise themselves, but also assists the progress of socialist society, the fundamental aim of which is to give all men equally the conditions of freedom" (p. 21).

But it is necessary first of all to wage a great battle against the demoralising and anti-social influences which capitalism develops in order to sustain its rule.

> "Above all it is necessary to generate in the minds of people the optimism, the self-confidence, the outlook that socialism *can* be built, and that a new society with new values can take the place of the old, and can proceed from strength to strength" (p. 20).

It can be done. It is being done. And this pamphlet will provide a further powerful weapon in the armoury of those who fight for real freedom—the freedom of communism.

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Discussion contributions:

On "The Basis of Marxism"

John Lewis

LUCIAN AMARAL is so anxious to avoid the least suspicion of what he would call Idealism that he falls over backwards and presents us with a caricature of Marxism which on the one hand is extraordinarily like the hard, unethical, mechanical doctrine that our critics try to make it appear, and on the other hand is most astonishingly contrary to the warm, passionate, deeply felt faith of Marx and Lenin.

It would be almost too unkind to go through his communication paragraph by paragraph to show this and perhaps it is unnecessary; but I will take two or three of the more important issues he raises as an example of what I mean.

1. Marxism as a philosophy

Amaral feels that *any* philosophy is bound to be a metaphysical system claiming to be final and absolute truth. This is not so; there are plenty of philosophies which are materialistic in tone, and sceptical in spirit, philosophies which strongly criticise abstract metaphysics—for instance, the philosophies of Locke, Hume, Bentham and Mill. The Soviet *Short Philosophical Dictionary* makes it plain that in Russia they are conscious of the fact that Marxism is indeed a world philosophy, for they define philosophy as "the name for the whole body of thought, in its historical development, concerning the kind of world we live in, the kind of beings we are, and our relation to the world"; and that is exactly what Marxism is.

2. Marxism and Ethics

Amaral also thinks that we should avoid ethics, since ethics stands for a fixed goal and necessarily assumes the existence of God as its source. But does it? There are plently of ethical theories which are entirely naturalistic and reject every form of supernaturalism or absolutism. One such theory makes *happiness* the ethical goal (Helvetius, Mill); another says that whatever maxim we should like to see practised by everybody is a valid one, and that we must "so act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end, never as a means only" (Kant). I am not accepting these theories, I am merely pointing out that a dozen or more exist which cannot be criticised on Amaral's terms.

And once again, Soviet literature today is explicitly ethical, ethics is taught in the school, and Soviet leaders lay down rules of conduct and proclaim ideals for socialist citizens. Marx spoke of "the simple law of morals and justice which ought to govern the relations of individuals", and Lenin of "the observance of the elementary rules of social life, known for centuries".

Such ethical rules are neither absolute and fixed, nor are they dependent upon the mind of God. To purge socialism of ethics is to destroy it.

3. Marxism and the alienation of man

Amaral thinks that if we accept this doctrine we shall see our fellow men as a soulless herd; and we shall reject the possibility of political awakening.

But although capitalism corrupts, it also arouses resistance and creates the class force which will overthrow it. These opposite tendencies coexist and interpenetrate. That it does corrupt was clearly seen by Lenin, who speaks of the working class as "corrupted by hundreds of thousands of years of slavery, serfdom, capitalism", while Marx says that "only through years of struggle can the class which overthrows cleanse itself of the mire of the old society".

It is not only in his earlier writings that Marx speaks of the dehumanising effect of capitalism, but all through *Capital* in his discussion of *commodity production*, which has brought about the reduction of everything to what can be bought and sold, including man; labour power, which is inseparable from the man himself.

4. The Individual and the State

Amaral does not believe that Marxism is opposed to the subordination of the individual to the State, since under Socialism this is inevitable.

This is surely quite contrary to Marxism.

(a) This doctrine is the Hegelian and totalitarian theory so frequently confused with communism, and Marx repudiated it. Under Socialism there is voluntary cooperation in working for the common good in which all share, not subordination.

(b) There may well be a period of strict discipline during the transition to socialism, but it

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must give way to the conditions in which "man will become accustomed to the observance of the elementary rules of social life . . . They will become accustomed to their observance without force, without constraint, without subjection, without the special apparatus for compulsion which is called the State" (Lenin, *The State and Revolution*).

A footnote on Rostow

MAY I add what may be regarded, perhaps, as a footnote or postscript to J. R. Campbell's review-article on Rostow in *Marxism Today* for May 1960? One of the central claims made by Rostow (and he has a rather "phoney" diagram to illustrate it) is that, measured over the span of several decades, the growth-rate of industrial output in the Soviet Union has been no greater than that of industrial output in U.S.A. The political implication of this alleged statistical "fact" is clear enough, and fits into the "free world" propaganda in whose service this American Professor has enlisted: how rapidly a country's industry can grow has nothing at all to do with whether it is a socialist planned economy or a capitalist, and the superiority of the former as an engine of economic growth (in which the world is coming to believe) is moonshine.

It is worth taking a look, therefore, at the basis of the statistics on which this "scholarly appraisal" (as the Yanks would call it) is based. For constructing his curve of Soviet growth he does not, of course, take the official Soviet figures: perhaps one could hardly expect him to do so. He takes instead one of the "indices" constructed (on various assumptions and on various bases) by "Western" economists. (Needless to say, he ignores the fact that the war years were years of devastation for the Soviet Union, but of prosperity and expansion for U.S.A.). But the crucial point is that he takes the *lowest* of these Western estimates—one recently concocted by an American called Nutter. This shows a growth of Soviet industrial production between 1928 and the 1950s that is little more than *a half* that shown in the estimate of his fellow-American Hodgman (mentioned by J.R.C. in his article) and *less than a half* that of Seton in this country (who shows the highest figure of any of the Western estimators). Nutter's figures are considerably lower than that well-known, and very voluble, anti-Soviet writer Jasny. To demonstrate his scholarly objectivity, Professor Rostow does not even tell us that these other "Western" estimates exist and that he has chosen the lowest of them. Perhaps (as we once thought of Eisenhower) he really didn't know!

If you want to know the reason why Nutter's estimate is so ridiculously low, there is a very simple one. His "index" is very heavily weighted with consumer goods; and, as is well known, during the first four, if not five, Five Year Plans output of consumer goods expanded much more slowly than the output of capital goods. While the list of commodity-items on which this index is based includes one or two heavy industry products such as iron and steel and coal and railway wagons, it omits entirely machinery-items, products of the engineering industry, which witnessed the most remarkable achievements of the Five Year Plans and which by the 1950s probably accounted for between a third and two-fifths of Soviet industrial output!

M.H.D.

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